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HENRY TAYLOR'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOL. II.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

HENRY TAYLOR

1800—1875

"Small sands the mountain, moments make the year
And trifles life" YOUNG

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.
1844—1875

NEW YORK
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1885

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

HENRY TAYLOR.

Chapter I.

TRAVELS.—DEATH OF EDWARD VILLIERS.—STANZAS IN REMEMBRANCE OF HIM.

Anno Dom. 1843. Anno Æt. 43.

Of my travels and abode abroad I shall not have much to say. All the world travels now, and I saw nothing but what all the world has seen; and what I saw probably made less impression on me, in my weakened health, than it might be expected to make upon most men of average or more than average intelligence; certainly far less than on my wife and on Aubrey de Vere, who accompanied us on our travels. Indeed, as to painting and sculpture, my tastes may be said to have been wholly uncultivated during my youth; and though my letters speak of the first impression made upon me by the galleries at Florence as very delightful—adding that I was then, perhaps, in the stage of cultivation in which the critical judgment affords more pleasure than it counteracts—yet I think that upon the whole I gained rather in discernment than in enjoyment by my acquaintance with works of art in Italy, and I do not believe that I gained very much in either.

The first object mentioned in my letters is the Cathe-

dral of St. Omer, which had been half pulled down in the Revolution; and I called to mind that when Southey and I had seen it some seventeen years before, he remarked with what different feelings one regards the ruins made by time and those which are of man's making. This was a raw ruin.

What came next was the most magnificent work of its age, the Cathedral at Cologne, with its one third of a tower, of which the other two thirds had remained for so many centuries still unbuilt. And I noted the opposite impressions made upon two of the most thoughtful minds I had known, by a great work thus broken off:

> "Things incomplete and purposes betrayed
> Make sadder transits o'er Truth's mystic glass
> Than noblest objects utterly decayed."

Such is Wordsworth's comment; while Aubrey de Vere saw in the incompleteness a token of the aspirations of humanity transcending its effective powers, more elevating to contemplate, insomuch as exalted hopes and endeavors are more admirable than success.

About the same time that we had left England, and in the same quest of health, but with much less hope of finding it, Edward Villiers, with his wife, had also set off for Italy. They had gone by another route, for it was thought best that two invalids should not travel together, but it was arranged that if any emergency should arise the one party should be within call of the other; and when we had reached Milan a letter arrived which summoned us to Nice. Edward had become suddenly worse and had not many days to live.

It is known to both the medical and the clerical attendants upon death-beds, that, with rare exceptions, the fear of death vanishes with its near approach. I do not know what are the ordinary antidotes; the effect is too general to

be accounted for in all cases by the love which casts out fear, or by an enhancement of those other spiritual affections to which one would most desire to ascribe it; but with Edward Villiers at least, whatever else may have been at work, there was a manifest intensity and exaltation of faith and hope.

I wrote to my father on the 29th November:

"We left Nice on the 16th, and I have seldom left any place with so much regret, and I shall always look back upon it as a place in which sorrow had fallen upon me with such soft and consolatory accompaniments as to take away all its bitterness, and to make the great calamities of life appear (forevermore, as I trust) less fearful to my eyes than they have been wont to do."

The feelings immediately attending such an event do not always afford a true index of those which are to come when depression shall have succeeded to emotion. How it was with me I hardly know now, and the only record which remains is a poem which expresses rather what I had lost than what I had felt. It has been published among my minor poems, but will be in its place here:

"IN REMEMBRANCE OF

THE HON. EDWARD ERNEST VILLIERS,

Who died at Nice, on the 30th October, 1843.

I.

A grace, though melancholy, manly too,
Moulded his being; pensive, grave, serene,
O'er his habitual bearing and his mien
Unceasing pain, by patience temper'd, threw
A shade of sweet austerity. But seen
In happier hours and by the friendly few,
That curtain of the spirit was withdrawn,
And fancy light and playful as a fawn,
And reason imp'd with inquisition keen,
Knowledge long sought with ardor ever new,

And wit, love-kindled, show'd in colors true
What genial joys with sufferings can consist.
Then did all sternness melt as melts a mist
Touch'd by the brightness of the golden dawn,
Aërial heights disclosing, valleys green,
And sunlights thrown the woodland tufts between,
And flowers and spangles of the dewy lawn.

II.

And even the stranger, though he saw not these,
Saw what would not be willingly passed by.
In his deportment, even when cold and shy,
Was seen a clear collectedness and ease,
A simple grace and gentle dignity,
That fail'd not at the first accost to please;
And as reserve relented by degrees,
So winning was his aspect and address,
His smile so rich in sad felicities,
Accordant to a voice which charm'd no less,
That who but saw him once remember'd long,
And some in whom such images are strong
Have hoarded the impression in their heart,
Fancy's fond dreams and Memory's joys among,
Like some loved relic of romantic song
Or cherish'd masterpiece of ancient art.

III.

His life was private; safely led, aloof
From the loud world—which yet he understood
Largely and justly, as no worldling could.
For he, by privilege of his nature proof
Against false glitter, from beneath the roof
Of privacy, as from a cave, survey'd
With steadfast eye its flickering light and shade,
And wisely judged for evil and for good.
But whilst he mix'd not for his own behoof
In public strife, his spirit glow'd with zeal,
Not shorn of action, for the public weal—
For truth and justice as its warp and woof,
For freedom as its signature and seal.

His life thus sacred from the world, discharged
From vain ambition and inordinate care,
In virtue exercised, by reverence rare
Lifted, and by humility enlarged,
Became a temple and a place of prayer.
In latter years he walked not singly there;
For one was with him, ready at all hours
His griefs, his joys, his inmost thoughts to share,
Who buoyantly his burthens help'd to bear
And deck'd his altars daily with fresh flowers.

IV.

But farther may we pass not; for the ground
Is holier than the Muse herself may tread;
Nor would I it should echo to a sound
Less solemn than the service for the dead.
Mine is inferior matter—my own loss—
The loss of dear delights forever fled,
Of reason's converse by affection fed,
Of wisdom, counsel, solace, that across
Life's dreariest tracts a tender radiance shed.
Friend of my youth! though younger, yet my guide,
How much by thine unerring insight clear
I shaped my way of life for many a year,
What thoughtful friendship on thy deathbed died!
Friend of my youth, whilst thou wast by my side
Autumnal days still breathed a vernal breath;
How like a charm thy life to me supplied
All waste and injury of time and tide;
How like a disenchantment was thy death!"

There are letters from the widow, from Miss Fenwick, from my father and mother, and others who knew Edward Villiers, bearing witness to the truth of the poem as a portrait. They are expressed in language which I do not fully reproduce—not because I should have any real difficulty in repeating praises of my poetry, for there is something wanting in me to create difficulties of that nature—but because I do not like to mix up more than is

necessary the truthfulness which is recognized in the letters with anything of inferior interest. And, indeed, it is by no means an advantage to a poem of the kind, in its effect upon those who read it merely as poetry and not as a record, that their simply due and impersonal appreciation should be brought into juxtaposition with the sentiments of those to whom the poem appealed through their affections.

My mother writes that she never met with a picture which was "so perfect a resemblance, so exactly as he stands in my remembrance of him;" adding that there was only one thing she did not recognize, "the 'sternness;' and though you call it a 'sweet austerity,' I did not happen to get a glimpse of it." I replied that her letter had pleased me very much; because, "though our tastes in poetry are often far apart, yet our feeling about human nature and character, with all their outward indications, has always been one and the same, and you would know therefore, better than any one else, what I wished to express in the poem and how far I had succeeded. The sternness which you say you did not see, was what you never had an opportunity of seeing. It came over him in his casual intercourse with people of the world with whom he had no sympathy."

My father, recurring to the subject after reading a letter from Mrs. E. Villiers, which I had sent him, says: "The letter does indeed fulfil all I had anticipated, and delights us on her account and on yours. I cannot imagine a more soothing and lasting pleasure in the retrospect of lost happiness, than for her to look back on it as embalmed in such a tribute of love. . . . I have never been able to read the verses or Mrs. Edward's letter without tears of pleasure and sadness and sympathy with her and you."

Edward Villiers had been longer and more intimately known to Miss Fenwick than to my father and mother; and it is thus that she writes: "Could you have seen with what deep emotion I read your lines on Edward Villiers, and how my heart responded to their truth, you would be better pleased than by the laureate [Wordsworth] pronouncing them to be very beautiful. . . . One whole day I had to devour them by myself. I liked it better that way for one day; but the next I wanted to impart my treasure, and the old poet found his way through one of those black, rainy days which visit these delightful regions now and then. . . . He had no fault to find, and he felt them. Dear Mrs. E. V., how she will feel them! How true they are! Yet you alone could have given that truth. . . . How grateful must those who *know* their truth be to have that truth given in words that cannot be forgotten!"

Chapter II.

RETURN TO ENGLAND.—ALICE LEFT AT SCHWALBACH TO COMMUNE WITH HERSELF.—AUBREY DE VERE CONVERTED INTO A PRACTICAL MAN.—MEDITATIONS ON ITALY IN STANZAS ENTITLED "LAGO LUGANO."—CORRESPONDENCE RESULTING WITH SIR EDMUND HEAD AND SIR FREDERICK ELLIOT.

Anno Dom. 1844. Anno Æt. 44.

By the month of May I was so far re-established in health as to be able to return to my duties in Downing Street; but my wife's health, it was thought, would be better for a few weeks of the waters at Schwalbach; and accordingly we parted at the Rhine, and, leaving her to find her way thither, Aubrey de Vere and I came home.

I do not know that a generous affection has ever wrought a more wonderful work than it did on our travels in converting Aubrey de Vere into a practical man. The most experienced courier could not have made arrangements for us day by day and hour by hour, or bargained with hotel-keepers and *Vetturini* more successfully or with more vigilant care and assiduity. In the September following I wrote to him: "We passed a very pleasant evening with you yesterday, reading over your old letters, very old, some of them, others recent, and reading also Alice's jotty journal got up *ex post facto;* and all that you had been to us and are to us came over us 'with a power and with a sign;' and if we are not better for all your love and care, dear Aubrey, I am sure there is not that love and care on earth that will make us so; and though that may

be, yet it is as well to take a different view of it and think better of ourselves for the present. . . . I wish you were here to help us with the journal. I have but a dim and confused memory, and few of the days of my life stand plotted out in my mind as almost all our days abroad seem to do in Alice's; but the jots help me to a good deal, and it is very pleasant to be able to revive the past and choose the mood of mind in which one lives it over again. Oh! those moods which were not chosen, and worse, those which were ill-chosen! Why could you not give me your alchemy of mind, or, rather, why could I not take it? for I know that you would have given it me, if I had been capable of it, at any cost."

Alice was left with no companionship but that of her maid and a child of Charles Elliot's who had been given into our charge during the absence of his father on foreign service, but she found nothing to complain of in her solitude. And I wrote to my mother, "Alice's solitude has been very good for her. 'Fasting,' some one has said, 'is angels' food;' and so it may be to some; and solitude may be supernal society."

She went into the woods, she says, in a letter to me, "Sometimes with a book for a companion, sometimes with a letter, sometimes with only pleasant thoughts and fancies and plans; but in the last, the plans, I rather deny myself; for were I to indulge in them I could make earth heaven by bringing heaven down to earth, instead of doing what we may do, carrying earth up to heaven. I wish you could have been with me this morning—this one morning; or if that would have been too great a pleasure, I wish you could have had a glass to show you how fair and bright everything was, and how freshly and strongly and enjoyingly I walked along through the wood with all sweet wild flowers glistening with dewdrops and the long

grasses trembling in the sunshine. And the birds and I had the wood all to ourselves, and not a creature did I meet, till at last, like a coward, as you know I am, I got afraid of being so alone and so far away, and turned back again and welcomed right gladly the sound of the mower sharpening his scythe. 'Far off, but not too far,' is what I like best; but what I like least is a crowd; and I dare say I should soon, if I stayed here long enough, learn to walk very boldly by myself all day. In the meantime I am not so wearied of my life as you would think; not so much so even as a pretty Tyrolese girl, who I fancied was married to a handsome Tyrolese boy, because I had seen him often with his arm round her waist. 'Ah, no,' she said, 'I am not married to him, nor shall I ever be; but in these watering-places we are both so *dull;* we kiss because we have nothing else to do.' I dare say hers were not the first kisses given out of *ennui, pour passer le temps.* I think she is very good; she has a bright, happy, simple, and very pure face, and I am sorry her kisses should be so squandered. . . . I had a very happy evening last night, though it was a sad one too. I had sent F—— early to bed, and I was lying on the sofa, looking out of the window, when something reminded me of Edward Villiers; and in one short hour there passed through my recollection all the times I had ever seen him, from the first evening in H—— L——'s little house, when he came to survey me for your sake, to the last day at Nice—our first visit to Grove Mill together—our happy Sunday evenings in Cambridge Terrace—our pleasant Blandford Square dinners when they were *tête-à-tête* with us—our mock quarrels —his affectionately respectful ways with your father and mother—his pleasant way of calling you 'Henry' to please me—our visit to him at Tunbridge Wells—the sound of his voice, the look of his eyes, his smile, all came back so

really to me and so near, and then it was all gone, and we were at Nice, and I saw only the beauty of his wasted face when he raised his hands and head and told us that he died at peace with God and in love to all his friends. And then again I seemed to have, as I looked at the evening clouds, a vision of him as he might now be—the same face and form indeed, so graceful and so sweet, so good and so noble, but a more elastic step, and a more clear and beaming eye; and the mere visionary fancy was more pleasant to me than realities can often be. Dear, dear Edward, and dearly and truly did he love you."

I spent the time of our separation with Miss Fenwick, who had taken a house at Hampstead to receive me in, and I was met by all sorts of attentions and services on the part of Lord Monteagle and his family. Of him I wrote, "There are few things that can be thought of on my account that he fails to think of;" and of his family, "No man certainly could be thrown among a set of more cordial and affectionate people than these Spring Rices; they seem to be all as glad to have me home again as if I were still more one of themselves than I am." And if I was happy at home in a matter-of-fact way, I had the satisfaction of being abroad in a visionary way; for I wrote to Alice, "I am all with you in the woods at Schwalbach. I remember those woods and their red beech-leaf flooring, and I can see you walking and sitting in them, and never did

'Oread or Dryad glancing thro' the shade'

delight the eyes of any solitary old satyr more than you do mine."

"Visionary" is the word I used, but from Aubrey de Vere's point of view the visionary and the real change places. "I do not know whether other people find it so," he says, in a letter to Alice, of September, 1844, "but to

me it seems that our deepest thoughts and most sacred feelings with respect to those whom we love are given to us in their absence; as if in the human affections as well as in heavenly things there existed some antagonism between sight and faith; and as if the deepest realities must ever remain in the region of the unseen, while all that we actually behold partakes more or less of the visionary."

The impression made upon me by Italy in its social and political aspect found a place in some stanzas of a poem called "Lago Lugano," written after a walk we had taken to that lake; and these are they:

"XIII.

Thence we return'd, revolving as we went
The lessons this and previous days had taught
In rambling meditations; and we sought
To read the face of Italy, intent
With equal eye and just arbitrement
To measure its expressions as we ought:
And chiefly one conclusion did we draw—
That liberty dwelt here with Heaven's consent,
Though not by human law.

XIV.

A liberty imperfect, undesign'd—
A liberty of circumstance; but still
A liberty that moulds the heart and will
And works an inward freedom of the mind.
Not such is statutable freedom: blind
Are they to whom the letter that doth kill
Stands for the spirit that giveth life: sore pains
They take to set Ambition free, and bind
The heart of man in chains.

XV.

Ambition, Envy, Avarice, and Pride—
These are the tyrants of our hearts: the laws
Which cherish these in multitudes, and cause
The passions that aforetime lived and died

In palaces, to flourish far and wide
Throughout a land—(allot them what applause
We may, for wealth and science that they nurse,
And greatness)—seen upon their darker side
Bear the primeval curse.

XVI.

Oh, England! 'Merry England,' styled of yore!
Where is thy mirth? Thy jocund laughter, where?
The sweat of labor on the brow of care
Makes a mute answer—driven from every door!
The may-pole cheers the village green no more,
Nor harvest-home nor Christmas mummers rare;
The tired mechanic at his lecture sighs,
And of the learned, which, with all his lore,
Has leisure to be wise?

XVII.

Civil and moral liberty are twain:
That truth the careless countenances free
Of Italy avouch'd; that truth did we,
On converse grounds and with reluctant pain,
Confess that England proved. Wash first the stain
Of worldliness away; when that shall be,
Us shall 'the glorious liberty' befit
Whereof, in other far than earthly strain,
The Jew of Tarsus writ.

XVIII.

So shall the noble natures of our land
(Oh nobler and more deeply founded far
Than any born beneath a Southern star)
Move more at large, with ampler reach expand,
Be open, courteous, not more strong to stand
Than just to yield—nor obvious to each jar
That shakes the proud; for Independence walks
With staid Humility aye hand in hand,
Whilst Pride in tremor stalks.

XIX.

From pride plebeian and from pride high-born,
From pride of knowledge no less vain and weak,

From overstrained activities, that seek
Ends worthiest of indifference or scorn,
From pride of intellect, that exalts its horn
In contumely above the wise and meek,
Exulting in coarse cruelties of the pen,
From pride of drudging souls to Mammon sworn,
Where shall we flee and when?

XX.

One House of Refuge in this dreary waste
Was, through God's mercy, by our fathers built—
That house the Church: oh, England, if the guilt
Of pride and greed thy grandeur have abased,
Thy liberty endanger'd, here be placed
Thy trust: thy freedom's garment, if thou wilt,
To piece by charters and by statutes strive,
But to its personal rescue, haste, oh haste!
And save its soul alive."

I sent the poem to Sir Edmund Head, and here are some comments by him:

"Free laws do not make liberty—a man legally free may be in spirit a slave—but I also believe that a man who is *legally* a slave will not be long free in *spirit*.

"The Spanish Constitution of 1823 did not make the Spaniards free; the spirit was not there to act in harmony with the mere dead letter of the law: but in my opinion no such spirit would have survived the continued pressure of the political institutions which prevailed under the Bourbon kings.

"To pass on to the question of energy and thought absorbed in those pursuits which prevail in this country, and contrasted with the careless joyousness of Italy.

"In the first place, I am prepared to maintain that, not only in a collective and national point of view, but also in an individual capacity, the English merchant or manufacturer is superior in vigorous action and in calm prudence in the management of his fellow-men to the French-

man or the German, to say nothing of the Italian. Now this superiority is, in my opinion, owing to the predominance of those very qualities which are incompatible with the thoughtless, happy temperament which you hold up in your poem.

"You will say these qualities are misapplied; their devotion to such objects as they now are directed to is overstrained. I will not deny that this may be so, but I do not think human nature is so constituted that we can say to energies of this description, 'Thus far, and no farther.'

"If this be so, it may be asked, 'Is the result worth purchasing at the price we pay for it?'

"*I* believe that it is. I believe that a greater *average* of individual excellence and happiness is secured by these qualities thus developed. I see and admit the evils, but I do not think you can in any case secure the good of two incompatible characters.

"Now, let us admit for a moment that a nation of small proprietors, with no absorbing pursuit of money or fame to spur them on beyond a certain equable rate, would enjoy for a given time a more pure and tranquil happiness. Let us assume that we had been such up to the end of the last century—where should we have been now? *As I believe, a province of France,* abased and degraded by slavery and tyranny of every species for the last forty years. I think our national greatness alone saved us, and that our national greatness depends on those very qualities with whose action you find fault.

"In estimating the average produce of happiness this consideration must not be overlooked.

"You will see, therefore, my dear Taylor, that I do not dispute the existence of this contrast to which you refer. I do not overlook the evil—I do not miss the poetical view

which this contrast admits of fairly and properly. My objection is simply that, in the poem to which I allude, I think you have taken a tone of moral reasoning of that gravity which requires to be based on the truth, and on nothing else; and, in my opinion, it is not true that the superiority which you claim for us Northerners can coexist with the qualities and tendencies which you there exhibit in the Southerners. I do not deny the attractive nature of these qualities and tendencies. They necessarily present themselves, to every one who knows what the South of Europe is, as an object of envy; but, if I must take them without the other elements, I think reason would refuse them."

To those strictures I made this reply:

"When I saw your letter I was rather ashamed of having betrayed a man occupied as you are into such a discussion. But you could not have bestowed the trouble upon any one who would feel more interest in your views on these subjects.

"I by no means dissent from the general tenor of your views; and I admit that, if my poem be supposed to require a combination of *all* the easiness of the Italian nature with *all* the steadiness and energy of the English, it requires a chimera. The qualities, in their absoluteness, are incompatible. But I construe my poem as not going that length, but signifying rather that *some portion* of our inordinate and misdirected energy might be abated, and that *some portion* of the Italian liberty of heart might then be combined with it. I admit, however, that this is putting a rather liberal construction upon it, and that what it will convey to most readers is mainly one view; or a view which you may, if you please, call one-sided. But then I maintain that that view is what you require that it should be, 'the truth, and nothing but the truth.' That it is the 'whole truth' I am, indeed, far from af-

firming; but this I conceive that it is not the province of poems, any more than of proverbs, to produce; and in the case of a truth like this, which blends itself with so many other truths in all their mixtures and modifications, it would be hard to say what is to constitute its wholeness; or, if we are not to be content with contemplating one side at once, where we are to stop. I admit that it should be *avowedly* one side (or, may I not better say, one truth, or set of truths, out of many bearing diversely on the subject), and that some glances at the opposing truths should be given by way of recognition that there are such. But are not these requisitions fulfilled in the poem? When the poem speaks of English laws, it speaks of them as what they are 'seen upon their darker side,' and when it speaks of English natures as degraded by worldliness and ambition, it glances parenthetically at the nobler and deeper foundations on which they rest.

"The set of truths which I have applied myself to enforce are those which appear to me to be most important in the present state of English society, and the most overlooked. For the antagonist truths there is no want of advocates. Nor is there, I think, any danger at present of reducing commercial and political activity to such a point as would cripple the country in its contests with foreign powers. It is more likely, I think, to be crippled by a gambling greediness in its commercial proceedings, and by the ignorant presumption of a political populace. Yet there is, I think, much more truth in what you say—that the power of the country to resist Bonaparte arose out of the same sources which give birth to our evil passions, political and commercial. From all sources in human nature mingling streams of good and evil will ever be found to flow; and while we acknowledge that the good proceeds from the same source as the evil, and cannot exist

without it, what we have still to do is to make the most of the one and the least of the other. I hold a reformed Parliament to be a good thing; yet something of the same argument which you have used might be directed, *mutatis mutandis*, against that; for I think there can be little doubt that, if we had had a reformed Parliament at the time of the Peninsular War, the Duke of Wellington would have been recalled before it was half fought out.

"After all, I do not know that there is any other difference in our views than that you would be more tolerant of one kind of excess and I of another, and that you would be less afraid than I of plucking up the tares."

And on these letters followed one from Sir Frederick Elliot:

"I am much obliged to you for sending me the correspondence with Head. After all, that two such men as he and you should be engaged, in the midst of this capital, in writing letters on such subjects, appears to me no bad sign of the times. It would be idle as well as presumptuous in me to add to the correspondence, and yet two things I cannot help saying.

"Although the world around us may be too busy and too noisy, is it not some consolation that speculation seems always to have thriven most in the times of greatest action, so that one may be supposed necessary to the other? International wars, civil wars, troubles of all sorts, seem to have been the parents of the greatest wisdom and the highest art; as if reflection that is snatched were more prolific than reflection that can be indulged. But, perhaps, at any rate, the action ought to be of rather a nobler kind than when everybody is absorbed, as at present, in trying to catch a little extra profit at somebody else's expense.

"If, again, we dismiss action and speculation together,

and think only of the easy enjoyment of life, is there not some reason to suppose that climate exercises a greater influence than even race or political arrangements? Under a southern sky existence itself is a delight, and we English have known there what it is to enjoy a lazy happiness. But in our heavy atmosphere leisure itself but leaves a man the readier prey to melancholy, and I doubt whether business does not expel more cares than it brings.

"With which comfortable sentiment, for a man to write from a desk where, at this season, all his daylight is spent, leaving him no better off at the hours which are his own than an Esquimau or a bat, I remain, etc."

Chapter III.

LONDON REVILED AND RENOUNCED.—HOUSE TAKEN AT MORTLAKE.—COLONIAL GOVERNMENT NOT DESIRED.—OFFICE OF UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE REFUSED.—"VAN ARTEVELDE" ACTED.—A POEM.

Anno Dom. 1844–47. Anno Æt. 44–47.

When I came back to London that misbegotten metropolis presented itself to me in a different light from any in which I had seen it before. I wrote to Alice, 21st June, 1844:

"Shall we not get rid of Blandford Square, and lead an easy, in-and-out-of-doors, house-and-garden life on Wimbledon Common? We shall be wiser and better and healthier and happier for it, and the postman's knock and all the other knocks and nuisances that flesh is heir to in London will come at longer intervals, and a fresh face shall I see in the morning when I look round, and a fresh eye shall I have to see it with."

And my letter was crossed by one from her to me, proposing the same thing. Then I wrote to Aubrey de Vere:

"We shall not live in London again, whether I retire, or not. We are quite of one mind as to that. It is *only* necessary, but it *is* necessary, to get to a little distance for a little time to see what a monster it is. One cannot see Leviathan from his belly, but get outside of him, and there he is." My sentiments about London seem to have been not much more flattering than those of Cowley, in his "Ode to Solitude:"

"Methinks I see
The monster London laugh at me.
I should at thee, too, foolish city,
If it were fit to laugh at misery;
But thy estate I pity.
Let but thy wicked men from out thee go,
And all the fools that crowd thee so,
Even thou, who dost thy millions boast,
A village less than Islington would grow,
A solitude almost."

We took a house at Mortlake, on the banks of the Thames, and I called it Ladon House. It was far enough off from shepherds and lilies, but the lines,

"Nymphs and shepherds trip no more
By sandy Ladon's lilied banks,"

happened to be in my head when I went to see it, and so the name came to it by a merely verbal and haphazard association. From the perpetual and often very inconvenient repetition of the same names, especially in naming streets, one might suppose that a distinctive name was a thing not easily to be invented. People seem to seek needlessly for something apposite, and to shrink from what is arbitrary, and forget that for the purposes of a name distinctiveness is generally the one thing needful.

We lived in Ladon House for about eight years, and it was there, on the 16th April, 1845, that my first child was born.

In 1845 Gladstone had become secretary of state for the colonies, and in April, 1846, I wrote to my mother:

"Have I told you, or have I not, of some communications which I had with Gladstone, soon after he had come into office, about a desire that he had to promote me? He told Stephen that he supposed I must be tired of remaining so long in the position in which I am, and must

be looking for some promotion, and inquired whether Stephen could tell what my wishes were, and whether a government would be what I would like. Stephen replied that a government would not suit my health unless it were in a good climate, and that it would be a risk to my health also if it involved (as almost all the chief governments do) great labor and responsibility. Stephen added that he could think of nothing that would better my condition unless it were one of the revenue commissionerships (*i. e.*, commissioner of customs, excise, or stamps), and he did not know whether I would think that preferable to what I have. Stephen having mentioned this to me, I took an opportunity of telling Gladstone that I was much obliged to him, but that as long as people at the colonial office were as kind to me as they were and had been, I could not be better than as I am."

And in December, 1846, when Gladstone had been succeeded by Lord Grey, a question arose, not as to promotion out of the colonial office, but promotion within it.

"James Stephen" (under secretary of state) "told me the other day that he had apprised Lord Grey of the necessity of looking out for some one to succeed him, saying that although he could not make it clear to his conscience to say that he would retire this week or next, or in a way to occasion great inconvenience, yet he must be considered as a man who had given notice to quit. Lord Grey dwelt on the difficulty of replacing him, and the necessity of having a man who had been tried and proved to fill his place, and said that he contemplated proposing it to me. Stephen told him that he did not think it would answer to me to undertake it—that I was not living for the day—that my official life was merely submitted to for the sake of a *viaticum*, and that my objects were elsewhere. To this, Lord Grey rejoined that I

might try it. On learning this, I told Stephen that I looked upon it as out of the question—that my body and soul were to be had twelve or fifteen years ago, but they were now no longer in the market, and that it would be idle to take up such an office without intending to go through with it."

In the October following the question presented itself in a shape no longer hypothetical, for James Stephen had an attack of illness which determined him to retire at once. Lord Grey did not offer me the place in distinct terms at first, but saying that I, who would have been the most satisfactory to him, being out of the question, he wished for my opinion as to the choice of another; and on my advice he offered it to James Spedding. He, as I have said in a former chapter, could not be persuaded that he was fit for it. Lord Grey then asked me to undertake it, and I also declined for more reasons than one, but for which of them chiefly I hardly know; and I think that in a letter to Lord Grey, on my retirement in 1872, I spoke of one too exclusively.

I have a better memory for facts than for motives, and, till I came to look into the letters of the period, I was under the impression that the main obstacle to my acceptance was the fact that Stephen had consulted me on the question whether he should retire, and that I had advised him to do so; having thus helped to make the vacancy which it was proposed to me to fill. That was no doubt one ground of my proceeding, but from what had taken place in 1846, and from my letters in 1847, I gather that there were others. A question might no doubt be raised, and a question was raised, whether a man with an increasing family and a small income is justified in refusing an office of £2000 a year on such a ground as that; and that was not the ground I put forward to my friends or others;

I kept it to myself. In a letter to my father, saying how glad I was to have his support in the course I had taken, I added: "Even had the office been compatible with health (which I feel sure it would not have been) it must have been utterly incompatible with the 'Life Poetic,' and I should have felt that I was deserting the higher for the lower walk in accepting it." There seems, therefore, to have been a plurality of motives, each of which might have been of itself all-sufficient.

In Aubrey de Vere's estimation, of course, the claims of the "Life Poetic" took their place as paramount. He wrote:

"With my views of the public I am disposed to be honest to it, but not extravagantly generous to it, as if it too were generous, or devoted to it, as if it were God. Modesty as well as avarice or vanity often seduces people into sacrificing literature to public life, the remote good to the immediate; because every man of ability *sees* the result of his own practical efficiency, whereas the results of his genius belong to the regions of Faith. So pray believe that faith as well as modesty is a great virtue. And whatever good you do to yourself, the public, or any one else, do no injury to the Muse; women are always so vindictive, and she is one."

It was contemplated to provide for James Stephen in a paid office of assessor to the judicial committee of the privy council. But Lord Monteagle foresaw great difficulties in obtaining the authority of Parliament for the creation of such an office, and what he wrote throws a cross-light upon the ways of Lord Brougham:

"I never can rely upon Brougham for doing justice to any *living* man of James Stephen's eminence. If the latter will but do Brougham the favor of dying, he may be assured of a most eloquent panegyric and of being desig-

nated as Brougham's most virtuous and excellent friend, son of a friend most excellent and virtuous, and the associate of all his toils and labors for the liberation of Africa, etc."

There is a curiously close ideal of such a character in La Bruyère: "Le bruit court que Pison est mort: c'est une grande perte; c'etoit un homme de bien, et qui méritoit une plus longue vie; il avoit de l'esprit et de l'agrément, de la fermeté et du courage; il etoit sûr, généreux, fidèle; ajoutez, pourvu qu'il soit mort." *

Sir James Stephen became a privy councillor, but without any paid office. When his health was in some measure re-established he was appointed professor of history at Cambridge, and Dr. Whewell, the Master of Trinity, spoke to me of his lectures with admiration from one point of view, and with dissatisfaction from another. He said they were fitted to take a permanent place in the literature of the country, and for that very reason were not adapted to the merely academical purposes which the lectures of the professor of history were intended to subserve. They may not now be as much read, perhaps, as his delightful ecclesiastical biographies, but I trust they occupy the place which Dr. Whewell assigned to them.

Though I did not accept Stephen's office, and though it was filled by an eminently active and capable man, Mr. Herman Merivale, I imagine that, for some time at least, my official work must have been nearly as heavy as if I had accepted it. Stephen's illness preceding his resignation had thrown his work into a rapidly accumulating arrear. Herman Merivale did not enter upon his duties immediately, nor when entering upon them could any new man be equal to them at an early moment, so that

* Caractères, c. 12.

the pressure brought upon me for a time was severe. And presently something crowded in from another quarter. I wrote to my father, 19th October, 1847:

"Great is the labor, as you may imagine, of stopping the gap; and in the middle of it what should happen but that Macready the actor paid me a visit at Mortlake, to say that he had adapted the first part of 'Van Artevelde' to the stage, and to offer me, on the part of the manager of the Princess's Theatre, £100 for the liberty of acting it for this season. I have not yet signified my consent, but I am to go to-night to hear Macready's reading of the play and then to decide: and if in the affirmative, the play is to be acted in a month. So this is on my hands; and my essays are coming out at Murray's, and my verses at Moxon's."

The consequence of all this was, that when the play was acted I was not well enough to go to the theatre till the sixth night, which was the last.

I thought Macready acted his part admirably, and I did not find so much fault as he and many did with others of the performers; and whatever might be his own feeling, so long as the audience was of the cultivated class, the play seemed to persons of that class to be successful; but of course the literary audiences could only be the few; and the Press, which either leads or follows the many, took the part of blaming the attempt to bring on the stage a work which was designed only for the library.

In Macready's diary, published in his "Reminiscences," there is this entry: "Nov. 22. Production of 'Van Artevelde.' Attended to business, did my best, worked my hardest. Went to rehearsal. Acted Philip Van Artevelde. Failed; I cannot think it my fault. Called for, of course. Forster, Dickens, Stanfield, Maclise, Spring Rice, and his brother, came into my room. I am very un-

happy; my toil and life is thrown away. I certainly labored more than my due in regard to the whole play, and much of my own part of Van Artevelde I acted well; but the play was so underacted by the people engaged in it, that it broke down under their weight." Vol. ii., p. 292.

My opinion (which is not worth much, however) was that the play was by no means ill-suited to the stage, though I should not have hazarded such an opinion had I not seen it there. Miss Bremer, the Swedish novelist, told me that it had been translated into Swedish and brought on the stage with great success at Stockholm.

I hope I was as sorry as I ought to have been for Macready's disappointment; and I must have been a good deal disappointed myself; but at this conjuncture I hardly had time to think much of anything but my health and my work.

Poetry, however, in the turbid confluence of interests and efforts, still kept a little pool apart for itself. I wrote to Aubrey de Vere:

"I am as much mobbed just now as if —— —— (this was an unmarried elderly lady) had risen upon me as one man.* Murray, Moxon, Macready, James Stephens, and

* The allusion is to an outbreak of temper on the part of a lady who had been living for some time at Curragh Chase. It is thus described in a letter from Aubrey de Vere, who was writing from the midst of the mobs and riots of the Irish crisis of 1847: "As I have no other disturbance to tell you of, I must tell you that —— —— rose like one man the other day, and mobbed the whole household. What the cause was none can say. She broke out at three o'clock on Friday. For three days the servants hid themselves. The higher orders begged her pardon, saying they never would do it again; and all alike had to remember the sins of their youth. The fourth day brought a deliverance. The mail car passes the gate at one o'clock P.M., and on that car the whole insurrection drove away!"

Lord Grey give me enough to do. Nevertheless I could take delight in that beautiful stanza you appended to your last letter. . . . I tried to write a second stanza by way of a pretext for putting it into my volume, but I failed, and I hardly expect to have time to try again."

I did try again, and the stanzas were these:

"I.

For me no roseate garlands twine,
  But wear them, dearest, in my stead;
Time has a whiter hand than thine,
  And lays it on my head.

II.

Enough to know thy place on earth
  Is there where roses latest die;
To know the steps of youth and mirth
  Are thine, that pass me by."

Chapter IV.

COLONIAL OFFICE IN ARMS TO FIGHT THE CHARTISTS.—FIGHTS THE PLANTERS IN COMMITTEE.—SIR ROBERT PEEL STRONG IN THE STRENGTH OF EPHRAIM.—A COMEDY OF ROMANCE FINISHED, AND ENTITLED "THE VIRGIN WIDOW."

Anno Dom. 1848-49. Anno Æt. 48-49.

So passed the year 1847, and the revolutionary year which followed placed the colonial office for one day in circumstances which were new to it.

It was and is still (in 1875), though it will soon cease to be, a commonplace brick house at the end of Downing Street, which celebrated street consisted till lately of houses of the same pattern; and I have often thought that England was probably the only country in Europe which could *afford* that its secretaries of state for foreign and colonial affairs should receive their foreign and colonial visitors in houses each of them less like a centre of state affairs than a decent lodging-house. In a small German principality such a house would be considered too mean for a porter's lodge; but in England we have not cared much to keep up appearances, wearing the star of our order within.

On the 10th April, 1848, the dingy old brick house from which orders had been issued daily to the four corners of the earth was called upon to consider itself a fortress, and stand on its defence against the Chartists, led by Feargus O'Connor. Its door was guarded and its windows blocked with bags of sand, and carbines were issued to us all. The

old sergeant who superintended the issue at the ordnance stores slyly observed, "Those weapons will do a deal of harm to *somebody* before the day is over," and certainly there were those among us who had yet to learn how to make use of the firearm put into our suicidal hands. I have known a sportsman claim superiority as a marksman over a brother in the army, saying that a soldier "could not hit anything smaller than a man." I was neither soldier nor sportsman, and had never had a gun in my hands since I was a boy. But there was no real ground for believing, nor did we believe, except as a mere possibility, that we should have to fight. I reached the office early in the morning, and the housemaid, who was lighting the fire, asked me if I thought the Chartists were going to kill us. I gave her a word of encouragement borrowed from Beatrice, and promised to eat as many as they should kill—an assurance which afforded her much satisfaction. My father-in-law had had a long talk with the Duke of Wellington that morning. Troops were posted everywhere out of sight, but everywhere available. The duke said, "Only tell me where they are and I'll stop them;" and his old eyes, Lord Monteagle said, sparkled like a girl's at her first ball.

The failure of the Chartist movement was signal and complete. And it was well for us and our carbines that our fighting quality was not tested. While we were awaiting the issue Frederick Elliot amused us with an anecdote of amateur fighting, of which the scene was in Syria, where some of our troops were engaged in the warfare with Ibrahim Pasha. An English tourist, who had seized the opportunity of doing some amateur fighting, was exchanging shot after shot with one of the enemy, all to no purpose, when a sergeant of the line dawdled up to him, with, "La! sir, let me shoot that 'ere Turk for

you, he'll be a-killing of you;" and, taking the gun out of the tourist's hands, he shot the Turk dead at once.

Though there was no fighting with the Chartists to be done in the colonial office in these years, they did not pass over without abundant pugnacities of the pen, especially in my division of business. And in 1849 we had to fight the West Indian merchants and planters and their representatives in a committee of the House of Commons. I wrote to my father on the 7th May: "I have not for many years had so much business on my hands, partly owing to the state of West Indian affairs, partly to factious proceedings in the House of Commons connected with them. A committee of that house has been sitting to inquire into our administration of the affairs of British Guiana, and one leading person in the West Indian interest, when asked by the committee what improvement the West Indians would propose in the administration of colonial affairs, said they objected to *me*, inasmuch as I knew very little about commerce and nothing whatever about the colonies. It so happened, however, that I had been for years advocating their interests and views on every one of the subjects which they were complaining about before the committee. I had drawn up a memorandum on them, in 1846, in this sense, and this memorandum was laid before the committee by the under secretary of state. So that they will find that they have been accusing me of ignorance to their own detriment."

I attended the committee frequently to hear what was going on, and I took note of Sir Robert Peel, who was a member of it. There he sat, day after day and week after week, profoundly silent. The committee was composed, of course, of men of opposite opinions, each of which was to be duly advocated. Most of them had no such knowledge of the matters at issue as could

enable them even to put pertinent questions to the witnesses. Sir Robert Peel afforded no assistance. Weary hours were wasted every day on subjects beside the purpose. Sir Robert Peel looked on with inexhaustible patience. The evidence came to an end at last, and then one member or another moved this or that report, and some idle and much ignorant disputation ensued. Sir Robert Peel *seemed* to listen. Nobody was convinced by anybody else, nor was there much reason why they should; and the contention appearing as endless as it was unprofitable, all parties became utterly tired of themselves and each other and the whole concern. Then rose Sir Robert, and what a miracle was wrought when the dumb man spoke! He said that he had put together some sentences which he thought might tend to reconcile the different views entertained in the committee, and he would beg leave to read the draft of a report which he had to propose. It was rather a long paper, giving an account of the constitution of British Guiana as it had existed under the sovereignty of the states-general of Holland and of the political changes it had since undergone, and it wound up with two or three vague conciliatory sentences, not calculated to have much practical effect one way or the other. Not the slightest opposition was offered, and Sir Robert's report was adopted without the change of a word. To me, as a spectator, this course of things seemed instructive. I thought of Sir Robert, and I thought of Ephraim, and I said to myself, "His strength was in sitting still."

In point of fact the report, all but the last two or three sentences, was written by me; and my object was to obtain the sanction of a committee of the House of Commons for a correct definition of the respective constitutional powers possessed by the several functionaries exercising

political rights in the colony, viz.: 1st, the Crown; 2d, the Constituencies; 3d, the "Court of Keisers;" 4th, the "Court of Policy;" and 5th, the "Combined Court" or "Court of Policy and Financial Representatives." This object was accomplished.

Such pressures of official work as I have adverted to had become frequent since the retirement of the Demiurge James Stephen; and they had retarded for the last year or two the progress of a play originally entitled "The Virgin Widow," and afterwards "A Sicilian Summer" (begun in December, 1845), by which I hoped to revive the Elizabethan comedy of romance. I wrote to my father early in 1849:

"My play has been brought to a stand midway the fifth act, business having pushed it aside for two months completely. All that I have done about it is to get the Gresham professor of music to fish up some good old music to two of the songs. The music is by Henry Lawes:

> "'Harry, whose tuneful and well-measured song
> First taught our English music how to span
> Words with just note and accent, not to scan
> With Midas' ears committing short and long.'

One of the songs is exceedingly well matched in this way, and I hope to get good music by hook or by crook for the others in time."

In June of the same year, however, I had come to the end of the play, and only wanted a few months for revision and improvement before I should publish it. "It makes the best *story*," I said to my father, "that I have written, and has, in the main, I think, the merits of sweetness and lightness. But it is not a comedy of smartness and repartee, nor have I regarded wit as the one thing needful. Possibly there may not be enough of it." I did nothing in the way of revision during the remaining sum-

mer months, not now because I was overworked, but because I was "so indolent and so depressed by the pestilential atmosphere;" for this was one of the years in which there was a visitation of cholera. In October, however, I went to work, and in December Alice announces to my mother, "the great news that the play is fairly finished—was finished satisfactorily to us both yesterday morning. It is to be sent to press, I believe, forthwith; so you will read it more agreeably than in the present very bad copy; but I wish he could have read it to you while it was still a child of the house. I do not know whether you saw Macready's criticisms and suggestions, but they were most useful, and in gratitude Henry has dedicated the play to him. It is, as you know, to be published first as a reading play by Longman. Henry would like it to be acted if it will act; but, besides other objections, actors are scarce in these days, and Macready (the best by far) is leaving the stage."

The play did not make much way with the world at first; and, sharing the fortunes of "Isaac Comnenus," "Edwin the Fair," and "St. Clement's Eve," its circulation from first to last has been little more than half that of "Van Artevelde." But it was eminently successful with some persons whom it was my greatest pleasure to please. I remember Charles Young, the actor, told me that his habit on the stage was to single out some one of the audience who looked especially intelligent and interested and act to him; and with me it has always been difficult to make much account of the mere abstraction we call "the public," and my sense of success and my enjoyment of it has been chiefly when it has presented itself in the concrete. I wrote to Alice, 24th November, 1858: "Nina Minto said she had passed the summer in my poetry, and had taken the greatest pleasure in "The Virgin Widow"

—its poetry, its characters, its songs, all delightful to her. I told her it was a consolation to me to hear it, as the world cared nothing about "The Virgin Widow," and would not read it, though it had always seemed to me the pleasantest play I had written, and I never could tell why people would not be pleased with it. It is odd that the lines she fixed upon to quote were not mine." The lines alluded to occur at the end of the following passage:

". . . Now for earth
And earth-encumbered ways. Oh! wilderness
Whose undergrowths and overgrowths conspire
To darken and entangle—here a mesh
Of petty, prickly hindrance—there the wreck
Of some high purpose stricken by the storm—
What wary walking shall suffice to thrid
Thy thickets? Happy they who walk by faith,
And in the dark by things unseen upheld,
Knowing that clouds and darkness lead to light,
Else unapproachable, and knowing too
That in this mortal journeying wasted shade
Is worse than wasted sunshine."

Two lines in Wordsworth's poetry which are perhaps more frequently quoted than any others—

". . . And flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude"—

were, to my knowledge, a contribution from Wordsworth's wife; and the above lines were a contribution from mine.

I have said in one of my essays that "it is better to be read ten times by one reader than once by ten," and a few years ago, when an accomplished lady sent me a little plauditory poem, this was my response:

"To H. C.

"It may be folly—they are free
Who think it so, to laugh or blame,
But single sympathies to me
Are more than fame.

"The glen and not the mountain-top
I love, and tho' its date be brief
I snatch the rose you send, and drop
The laurel leaf."

Chapter V.

FAMILY PARTY AT TUNBRIDGE WELLS.—SUPERFLUOUS SERVANTS AND THEIR WAYS.—MR. AND MRS. CAMERON.—LORD AND LADY JOHN RUSSELL.

Anno Dom. 1849. Anno Æt. 49.

In July and August of 1849 there had been a gathering at Tunbridge Wells of my father and mother, Miss Fenwick, and ourselves. My father and mother were in their 77th and 79th years, and my father's lifelong semi-blindness was now in a way to be something worse; but they were certainly not the least cheerful of the party. My mother's health had never been of the comfortable kind, but I doubt if it was much worse now than in earlier years, and old age had put but little pressure upon the lightness of her mind. "We have no reason to complain," an old friend said to her, "at seventy-seven years of age, for we both walk about as stoutly as the young ones." "Yes, Maria," she answered, "but they say that ghosts walk." It was not quite so with Miss Fenwick. She had joined us at Mortlake in the beginning of July, and the way in which she had written of her coming visit had indicated some increase of the constitutional depression of spirits to which she had always been subject; and I think there had been circumstantial as well as constitutional depression just at that time. The cloud which had come over Wordsworth since his daughter's death, two years before, had probably darkened the days to her; for the Wordsworths were with her at Great Malvern, whence she wrote; and moreover she had felt some anxiety about

Alice's health, though from this she was now in a great measure relieved. "Now, I trust, all will go on well," she says; and adds, "it is not quite as unreasonable to say to our friends, 'Be quiet,' as, 'Be happy;' therefore I venture on this recommendation, though it may be difficult enough to observe. Next to being quiet, to be dull may be the best thing; and I think I may be able to help you to that, and without any particular effort on my part; so after next Saturday I shall be on my way to you." She used to maintain that even without any special reason for seeking repose at one time or another, a certain portion of dulness was a wholesome element in every life; and that may be true doctrine: and she said also, but this was rather far from the truth, that she was "a great promoter of it." Sadness and disturbance did in reality come to her often, but dulness never. At Tunbridge Wells, if she was not quite so cheerful as some of us, she was very loving and only occasionally oppressed. This was the last time when all five of us came together, and there were our two children to enliven the meeting; and whatever may have been the physical drawbacks, I trust she shared largely in the happiness of the time. To my father and mother I think it was a happiness without interruption and without alloy. My wife's love for them both had deepened with every year of the ten which had elapsed since our marriage, and theirs for her was ardent now for her own sake as well as for mine. A quarter of a century has passed; I am nearly as old now as they were then; but I can scarcely read some of her letters to them without the feelings with which I know that they must have been received. Southey has said—

> "The source from which we weep
> Too near the surface lies in youth,
> In age it lies too deep—"

But I think that is not true. Tears come more easily to old than to young eyes, unless childhood is to be included in youth. What I should imagine to be true is, that in age tears come at a less urgent call than in youth and manhood, and that with the less urgent call there is less energy of grief, but also less energy of other emotions to supplant:

> "'Tis true
> The sharpness of our pangs is less in age,
> As sounds are muffled by the falling snow;
> But true no less that what age faintly feels
> It flings not off"—

says Wulfstan the Wise. Tears came easily to my father's eyes in old age, but they were more often tears of tenderness than tears of grief; for his greatest sorrows had been suffered in earlier life, and when they came back to him it was out of the long past and through the falling snow. His happiness in me was more unmixed now than in any former years, and his happiness in Alice and his grandchildren had accrued and gone on increasing in his old age; and at Tunbridge Wells, in 1849, with his health, which was so soon to break up, only a little shaken yet, I think his happiness in us was at its summit; and when we dispersed to our several destinations we all looked back on the weeks we had spent there as a sort of festival of the affections.

Alice, writing to my mother in the December following a minute account of the children and their ways, concludes with a glance at the summer foregone: "And now have I told you enough of your firstborn grandchild; and when shall you see him again to verify a mother's statement? Whenever and wherever it may be it can scarcely be a pleasanter meeting than our last; nor have I felt or seen since we parted any kindness so loving as yours was

to me at Tunbridge Wells, my own dear old tender mother."

I was the first to quit Tunbridge Wells, for my holidays had come to an end; and, leaving my wife and children, I took up my abode alone for a time in a large house in South Street, belonging to my wife's brother-in-law, but not occupied by him at the moment. "The house is as full and noisy as an inn; eleven servants (of whom five are nurses or nursery-maids), all running over each other in their haste to do nothing; and less comfort in attendance than we had with five. I do not know how I shall get anything done in South Street, for I have a butler, a page, and two maids there."

I was busy with the last act of "The Virgin Widow," and I rather think the state of things I witnessed gave me a hint for the fifth scene:

"STEWARD. Call you this a Hall of Audience? Why, it is a ship's cabin in a gale of wind. Here, Trollo, move this table to the wall and set the throne upon its legs. Where is Grossi? Be tender with it, for the three legs that are old have the dry-rot and the one that is new hath a warp. Is Grossi here?

UNDER STEWARD. No, sir, he is ill of a surfeit.

STEWARD. I thought so; a walk betwixt bed and board is the best of his day's work. Where is Tornado?

UNDER STEWARD. He hath a quarrel with Secco, and will not come in the same room with him.

STEWARD. The cause? the cause?

UNDER STEWARD. Nay, sir, I know not that.

STEWARD. Then I will tell you, sir; short work's the cause;
Short work it is fills palaces with strife.
Nothing-to-do was Master Squabble's mother,
And Much-ado his child."

I think that the reform which many of our English households require may be summed up in fewer servants, higher wages, and more work.

At Tunbridge Wells was the beginning of a friendship

which, though the upstart of a day, has not been as short-lived as friendships so up-springing are wont to be, for it has now (in 1875) lasted more than a quarter of a century.

"Do you recollect," I wrote to my father, 19th September, 1849, "Mrs. Cameron, who was our neighbor on Ephraim Common?"

And before I proceed with the letter it may be well to say something about the lady. She was the wife of Charles Hay Cameron, a Benthamite jurist and philosopher of great learning and ability, with whom I had been slightly acquainted in our youth. He had since filled high offices and rendered important services in the East, ending in the place previously filled by Lord Macaulay, of fourth member of council at Calcutta. His wife was the daughter of an Indian civil servant, also in high office, and they had met at the Cape of Good Hope, whither each had been sent for recovery of health. If her husband was of a high intellectual order, and as such fell naturally to her lot, the friends that fell to her were not less so. Foremost of them all were Sir John Herschel and Lord Hardinge, with both of whom the friendships she had formed (with the one at the Cape, with the other in India) were ardent and lifelong. And Sir Edward Ryan, who had been the early friend of her husband, was not less devoted to her in the last days of his long life than he had been from the times in which they first met.

She had been educated at home; but her life having been passed since her early girlhood almost entirely in India, where she had been latterly, in the absence of the governor-general's wife, at the head of the European society, she made small account of the ways of the world in England; and perhaps had she been less accustomed to rule, she would still have been by no means a servile fol-

lower of our social "use and wont." For, without arrogating any lawless freedom, perhaps, indeed, unconsciously, it belonged to her nature to be, in non-essentials, a law unto itself.

"Do you recollect" (I proceed with the letter) "Mrs. Cameron, who was our neighbor on Ephraim Common? She appeared to us to be a simple, ardent, and honest enthusiast, and her husband a simple, manly, kind, agreeable, and very able man; and she seems a very much-indulged and yet a very devoted wife."

Some months later I wrote: "Does Alice ever tell you, or do I, of how we go on with Mrs. Cameron, whom you saw the beginning of at Tunbridge Wells? how she keeps showering upon us her 'barbaric pearls and gold'—India shawls, turquoise bracelets, inlaid portfolios, ivory elephants, etc.—and how she writes us letters of six sheets long all about ourselves, thinking that we can never be sufficiently sensible of the magnitude and enormity of our virtues? And, for our part, I think that we do not find flattery, at least this kind (for hers is sincere), to be so disagreeable as people say it is; and we like her and grow fond of her."

It was, indeed, impossible that we should not grow fond of her—impossible for us, and not less so for the many whom her genial, ardent, and generous nature has captivated since. In the early days of the friendship, upon some question arising, I forget what, Mrs. Cameron said to Alice of me, "When I know him better, . . ." and Alice broke in—"But you never will know him better; when you know him more you will know him worse." It was said lightly; but had she said it seriously, she would not have been far wrong. For among the many golden fruits of friendship that grew upon this tree there was one that was not golden—one by which I was impov-

erished and not enriched. I suffered the consequences, ordinary, whether in age or in childhood, of being too much indulged. Within the sphere in which the over-indulgence operated I came to be often more wanting in consideration for others than I think it was my way to be when unspoiled. I was unconscious of it at the time; it was masked from me; but, looking back when the masquerade of life is over, I see it plainly enough.

This friendship, like all other friendships, was, of course, to have its trials and vicissitudes. But with whatever flights and falls, and in the course of time natural changes of tone and complexion, it has survived, as I have said, for a quarter of a century, and is now a good, sound, solid, and very genuine friendship in the first degree.

In the very month in which I am writing (October, 1875) Mr. and Mrs. Cameron have taken their departure for Ceylon, there to live and die. He had bought an estate there some thirty years ago, when he was serving the crown there and elsewhere in the East, and he had a passionate love for the island, to which he had rendered an important service in providing it with a code of procedure. The Duke of Newcastle, when secretary of state about ten or twelve years ago, asked me whether I thought it would be desirable that he should offer him the government. His friends were consulted. He was then, I think, about seventy years of age, and the conclusion arrived at was that his health was unequal to such a charge. But he never ceased to yearn after the island as his place of abode, and thither, in his eighty-first year, has he betaken himself with a strange joy. The design was kept secret—I believe even from their nearest relatives—probably to avoid discussion and expostulation, till their places had been taken in the packet. I sent him a farewell let-

ter, and I received a touching answer, written at Southampton, on the eve of embarkation:

"In the whirlwind which attended my departure from Freshwater your letter was mislaid, and as my memory is gone except what Madame de Stäel called 'la mémoire du cœur,' I only know that it was very kind, and indicative of old and uninterrupted friendship, which I now thankfully acknowledge and reciprocate. I have long contemplated Ceylon as my final resting-place, and fixed on the site of my tomb. The site, I believe, has passed out of my possession; but my intention may still be accomplished *cy-près*, as the lawyers express it. Give my best love to Alice and your daughters.

"Your old and faithful friend, C. H. Cameron."

In this year I once more, but I think once only, put my head out into society in London, and Alice took a favorable view of my qualifications for it in everything except health:

"The night before last he went to a party at Lord John Russell's, which he enjoyed wonderfully, as he said he felt as if people had forgotten how unpopular he had been, and were all disposed to say, 'Hail, fellow, well met' to him; and, indeed, I think (and who can know him so well as I do) that he has only to make himself known now to be, at least, as popular as he ever was the contrary. But the fact is, society (whether we like it or not) would never do for either of us. It takes far too much out of all but the very strong, and very strong we neither of us shall ever be."

And now I think my forty-ninth year is disposed of. On the 19th October I wrote to my mother: "So begins my fiftieth year, and, having my father and you still

with me, I hardly seem to be aware that I have entered upon the decline of life, or to discern any lessening of the light; and, indeed, I felt more in the valley of the shadow in my fortieth year than now in my fiftieth, advancing health having told upon me more than advancing years. So far, well."

Chapter VI.

MORE OF MRS. CAMERON.—WORDSWORTH'S LAST DAYS.—DEATH AND BIOGRAPHY.—TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM."

Anno Dom. 1850. Anno Æt. 50.

The first event of the year 1850 was the birth, in February, of a second daughter; and with this Mrs. Cameron reappears, full, as before, of love and service.

"There is a wonderful energy and efficiency in her," I wrote; and, after describing what she had done for Alice, I proceed:

"The transference of her personal effects is going on day after day, and I think that shortly Cameron will find himself left with nothing but his real property. One of the last presents was a very costly Indian shawl, and yesterday came a drawing from my bust, splendidly mounted, which she is about to have lithographed. She has set Dr. Heimann to work to complete his translation of 'Van Artevelde.' In short, she is a peculiar person, zealous of good works."

The Indian shawl mentioned in this letter, though accepted at the moment (under a threat, if I recollect right, that else it would be there and then thrown into the fire), was returned shortly after, and we heard no more about it. But in the course of time Alice had occasion to pay a visit to the Hospital for Incurables at Putney, and was astonished to see, on a very expensive piece of mechanism, in the shape of a sofa, constructed for the use of a certain class of patients, her own name inscribed as the donor.

On inquiry, it proved to have been presented by Mrs. Cameron as if on Alice's behalf, and we found that it represented proceeds realized by the sale of the returned shawl.

Alice writes: "The Camerons are coming down to live near us. They have taken a house near the Park. I am glad of it. I have quite made up my mind about her and like her very much. She is a fine, generous creature, with many virtues and talents; but her great gift is that of loving others and forgetting herself." And in July I took up the word: "The Camerons have grown to be a great deal to us in our daily life—more than one would have thought possible in the course of a year's intercourse arising out of an accidental meeting. Mrs. Cameron has driven herself home to us by a power of loving which I have never seen exceeded, and an equal determination to be beloved. On meeting with some difficulty last winter she told Alice that before the year was over she would love her like a sister. She pursued her object through many trials, wholly regardless of the world's ways, putting pride out of the question; and what she said has come to pass, and more; we all love her, Alice, I, Aubrey de Vere, Lady Monteagle—and even Lord Monteagle, who likes eccentricity in no other form, likes her." In no long time Miss Fenwick was added to the number of her conquests.

And Miss Fenwick may have stood in need of a new friend, for she was about to suffer the loss of an old one. Wordsworth, for want, perhaps, of habits of occupation in other ways, had continued the exercise of his poetic faculty beyond the age at which it is often desirable either for a poet or for his fame that it should still strive to be active and productive. But at his daughter's death a silence *as* of death fell upon him, and though during the

interval between her death and his own his genius was not at all times incapable of its old animation, I believe it never again broke into song. Miss Fenwick writes, in June, 1849: "I see no difference in Mrs. Wordsworth, but his darker moods are more frequent, though at other times he is as strong and as bright as ever. . . . His is a strong but not a happy old age."

His life lasted for less than a year from the date of this letter, and on the 25th April, 1850, she writes: "This post has brought me the tidings of the death of Mr. Wordsworth, . . . with as little suffering as can attend this last circumstance of our being, and he seemed sensible to the last. . . . Mrs. Wordsworth bears up as we would expect of her. She will take to the thoughts that have comfort in them, as well she may, for she has done all things well through life. I take to comforting thoughts, too, about him and her. He did the work he had to do in this world nobly. His last years were given for the good of his own soul. I am anxious to be with my beloved Mrs. Wordsworth."

My answer is dated the 26th April: "We had heard of the event and you were much in our thoughts. No man could die less than he, so much of his mind remaining upon earth; and the happiness that remained to him in life had run low; so that he seemed to have lived as long as we could desire that he should live, so far as regards any ends and purposes that are within our cognizance. But it is a great and sad event, and that one cannot but feel. He was the greatest of the two great men that remained to us, and I believe the old duke is the same age."

Following on the death of Wordsworth came the question how and by whom his life should be written. What I had to say was said in a letter to Miss Fenwick of the 24th May, 1850: "Unless I had before me the materials

that may exist for a life of Mr. Wordsworth I should be rather afraid of giving an opinion, and I should not feel that the opinion was good for much. I suppose the letters are not many in proportion to the period covered, not long, nor abounding much in personal interest, and that the best and greatest part of his mind was put into his poems. And if the biography is to be given by mere narration, it would seem presumable that a very brief biography would be the best, for I suppose that the facts are few. But of this Mrs. Wordsworth and Dr. Wordsworth and yourself must have far better means of judging than I or anybody else. One thing I conceive will have occurred to you—that there is no choice between a very brief biography and a very explicit one; and that a biography which should be explicit as to mere fact would lead to much misconstruction; and that much explanation would do nothing with the world at large to clear up the questions that would arise. For a composite character will always be inscrutable to the many, very often even to the few."

Miss Fenwick replied (Rydal Mount, 3d June, 1850): "From the very first I had given the opinion, which it was a satisfaction to find was yours too, on the proposed biography. This is dear Mrs. Wordsworth's also, and we both drew it from the same source. She wishes me much to be here for a while with Dr. Wordsworth. Indeed, in a paper signed by Mr. Wordsworth, he refers him to me as one who could give him information and who knew him well. This gives me more claim to have my opinion considered than otherwise I could have expected, in case Dr. Wordsworth has taken a different view of the *kind* of biography which should be written."

She stayed at Rydal Mount till Dr. Wordsworth came, and, after much preliminary discussion, went to pay a visit

to her niece in Northumberland, promising, however, at his earnest request and that of Mrs. Wordsworth, to return shortly and remain for a fortnight or three weeks, when she conceived that the plan of the biography would have been formed.

Dr. Wordsworth gave his time and attention most assiduously to the task assigned to him. He had accepted it, Miss Fenwick said, "without much knowledge of his uncle, or, indeed, of his poetry, and he had had all this to get up;" but, she added, "he is a very able man and good," and, she trusted, that "on the whole, he might execute the work satisfactorily."

The biography produced was very far from being the brief one contemplated by Mrs. Wordsworth and Miss Fenwick, and, as I understood, by Mr. Wordsworth himself. Of what led to the different scale I have no knowledge; but I think the adoption of it was regretted by many of those who were most interested in Wordsworth and his works.

Miss Fenwick writes: "I dare say we should think much alike of the memoir. It was written in far too great a hurry. The original idea of it was good; but time was wanting to select his materials and condense. A few years hence a better life may be written." For my own part, I think the life is rather buried in the biography than brought to light in it.

Next came the question of a monument, and on this too my views and those of Miss Fenwick were in accord.

"Though one would have been sorry," she writes, "had there been no demonstration of a public feeling, yet, when I think of a monument in Westminster Abbey, and know his feeling and opinion of such things, I do dislike the idea with all my disliking feelings. I never heard him approve much of any memorial excepting for statesmen and

warriors. . . . Yesterday evening I visited his grave in Grasmere Churchyard, as yet even without a headstone. Who that has visited, or ever shall visit, his grave in the churchyard among the mountains would wish for any monument?"

A committee was appointed, however, and a sum exceeding £2000 seems to have been subscribed. I was put upon the committee, but I have no recollection of having taken a part in its proceedings. I wrote to Miss Fenwick, 1st July, 1850: "I do not think that I can do any good in the committee. Of course, a great poet's works are his monument, and every other must be as a molehill beside a pyramid. If there were some great sculptor living whose genius lacked an opportunity and a subject, a monument to Mr. Wordsworth might furnish one; but I know of no such person, and the bust of Mr. Southey put up in Westminster Abbey by the committee of which I was a member (the worst, I think, of the many bad likenesses of him), has given me a great disinclination to hazarding such things. What I should like would be simply to have a copy in marble of Chantrey's bust put up in Westminster Abbey, and another in Grasmere Church. What you say to Alice makes me think that this might probably be your feeling and that of Mrs. Wordsworth."

A statue and a bust were eventually produced; the former, I think, bad, the latter (by Mr. Thrupp) very good as originally moulded, from a mask, but sadly smoothed away into nothingness at the instance of some country neighbor of Wordsworth's, whose notions of refinement could not be satisfied without the obliteration of everything that was characteristic and true. The sculptor had never seen Wordsworth, and may be excused for his undue deference to the opinions of one who had been familiar

with the face. But it was a lamentable defeat. Some casts were taken from the unsophisticated mould—one, at least, which I possess, and I think more. It is admirable as a likeness, in my opinion, and, to my knowledge, in that of Mrs. Wordsworth; and there is a rough grandeur in it, with which, if it were to be converted into marble, posterity might be content.

In the time of life which I had now reached, it is in the course of nature that the friends and relatives of the generation preceding one's own should begin to drop off, and Wordsworth's death was followed by that of others in rather rapid succession. For me, therefore, a series of funereal poems was not ill-timed, and it was in these days,

"When the long funerals blackened all the way,"

that Tennyson's "In Memoriam" came forth to the world. Those who mourned the loss of Wordsworth might have been reconciled by these poems, if by any, to the transference which took place of pre-eminence in popular estimation as a poet from him to Tennyson. Popularity, indeed, is scarcely the word to designate the species of celebrity which Wordsworth had achieved. It is what he himself would have distinctly disclaimed. He had been accustomed to regard it as derogating from a poet's title to greatness. During the thirty years, more or less, for which his poetry was little read, this was no doubt a consolatory creed; and when it came to be much read, he would still refuse to admit that it was popular. When I adverted to the large circulation of his works: "No," he said, "a steady, moderate sale;" and there was this much of truth in it—that to the reading *populace* his poetry never did reach and probably never will. For my own part, I see no reason why contemporaneous popularity should argue eventual evanescence, when the poetic ele-

ments are various, some commending themselves to the shallower mind, some to the deeper. If I am to adopt Wordsworth's doctrine, I should found it on history rather than on theory; and no doubt there is this to be said for it, that the poets—at least the English poets—who have been most famous in their day and generation have not taken a corresponding rank in the days and generations that have followed.

Tennyson's work came out, as I have said, seasonably for us mourners; and the impression it made upon me, as upon others, was signal and profound.

"Have you read Tennyson's 'In Memoriam'?" I wrote to Miss Fenwick, 1st July, 1850. "It is a wonderful little volume. Few—very few—words of such power have come out of the depths of this country's poetic heart. They might do much, one would think, to lay the dust in its highways and silence its market towns. But it will not be felt for a while, I suppose; and just now people are talking of the division of last Friday."

Long after this date, some fourteen years after, "In Memoriam" reappears in a letter to Alice: "I met in the train yesterday a meagre, sickly, peevish-looking elderly man, not affecting to be quite a gentleman, and bearing rather a strong likeness to Nettleton the ironmonger, and on showing him the photographs of Lionel Tennyson which I carried in my hand, he spoke of 'In Memoriam,' and said he had made a sort of churchyard of it, and had appropriated some passage of it to each of his departed friends; and that he read it every Sunday and never came to the bottom of the depths of it. More to be prized this, I thought, than the criticisms of critics, however plauditory."

Chapter VII.

MY FATHER'S LAST YEAR.—HIS DESCRIPTION OF SIR JOHN HERSCHEL.—SIR ROBERT PEEL'S DEATH.—ILLNESS OF MY FATHER AND MOTHER.—MY FATHER'S DEATH.—MY MOTHER'S LETTERS IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR (1851).

Anno Dom. 1850-51. Anno Æt. 50-51.

My father's sight, always so imperfect, had been failing more and more in 1849; and in the first months of 1850, though still able to write, no effort or device could enable him to read. This was a severe deprivation. His life had been a life of reading, and for the last thirty or forty years a life of little else. It may not be worth while perhaps for a man to order his whole life with a view to what may become of it in an old age which may happen not to be reached; but if the closing years can be cared for without much sacrifice, it will be well in the matter of occupation not to put all upon one plank. My father had yet nearly twelve months of life to get through when he found that his occupation was gone: "I yesterday laid away in my silver snuff-box my equally useless eye-glass, my valuable bosom friend for so many years. I could not but think of Johnson's melancholy lament on his old servant and friend:

"'Condemned to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day;
By sudden stroke or slow decline
Our means of comfort drop away.'

I hate this harping on the same string, and will endeavor

to cure myself of it; but as it is always striking on one's own sense it is difficult to prevent the reverberation. One string can never tire any of us when it sounds constant affection for you and yours."

We had long been urging them to leave their solitary abode in the north and live either with us or near us. We had now found a house quite near which seemed all that they could wish. But my father could not be persuaded to leave Witton Hall. My mother ascribed his decision to "the unaccountable reluctance of old people to change, especially change of place," saying at the same time that she felt it herself; but I think she felt something else too. My father was incapable of fear, and, whenever it was possible, unconscious of infirmity; and this would often expose him to no little danger when out of her sight. Lord Monteagle once gave us an account of what he had witnessed with dismay, when Sir Charles Barry took my father over the works at the top of the new Houses of Parliament, then in course of construction. Old, half-blind, and subject as he was to attacks of giddiness, he stepped along the narrow planks extending over the yawning chasms with the utmost indifference, contending as he went that the principle of a certain mechanism for hoisting, which Sir Charles supposed to be new, was known to the Romans, and was to be found in "Vitruvius." Now, at Witton, he solaced his unoccupied hours with walking in the carriage drive that led to the Hall, and had no inducement to go beyond his own gates; whereas if he were to live in our neighborhood, the streets of London, with all their crossings, would be at hand.

Instead of my father and mother coming to live near us, Mr. and Mrs. Cameron came.

5th April, 1850.—"I went to dine with them one day last week, to meet Sir John Herschel, a very striking-look-

ing man, with a face older than his age, but full of fire, and very intellectual. He asked me to pay him a visit in the country, and perhaps I shall, some day. Science is what I can least penetrate in the intellectual world, and I appreciate scientific greatness merely as a person who has no ear for music would appreciate the greatness of Handel, knowing it without understanding it. But it would still be interesting to me to see what a great philosopher is like."

My father replied: "Your mother writes on other matters; I, to impress upon you the anxiety I feel that you should by all means cultivate the acquaintanceship with the offer of which Sir John Herschel has honored you. You are not, indeed, prepared to receive any advantage which scientific demonstration may convey, but you cannot fail to receive impressions and suggestions which will enlarge and enrich your mind; for your intellectual range has been far too limited in proportion to your powers. I speak of Sir John Herschel, not from being myself competent to comprehend all the sublimities of his science, or to follow him in the marvellous means of its demonstrations, but from knowing just enough to feel my mind exalted by the contemplation of the wonders of divine power and wisdom; and, when these seem to dwarf all human intelligence, yet is our gratitude, admiration, and regard excited by the knowledge that some gifted individuals are empowered to comprehend these sublimities and to unfold them to the comprehension of their fellowmen. When the British Association met at Newcastle Sir John Herschel was president, and Lord Monteagle's intimate acquaintance, Peacock, the Leucasian professor of astronomy at Cambridge, vice-president. They had been rivals in the schools at Cambridge, and Peacock boasted that he was but second wrangler only because

Herschel was the first ('*et secum certasse feretur*'). Peacock's good-nature, knowing my very near sight, placed me within two of the president's chair, and never was I so struck with the grandeur of a human countenance as with that of Sir John Herschel, displaying the majesty and energy of genius, softened into dignified suavity of deportment; and the latter qualities were happily influential in regulating the proceedings of the assembly; for, philosophers as they were, they required some gentle pressure to keep them to the point in hand, and especially to check the acid effervescence of Babbage."

To this I replied: "I am quite of your mind about Sir John Herschel, and though as regards the faculties which have made him famous I can only see him through a glass darkly, yet in other respects I can see him face to face; and I am glad to have had one opportunity of so seeing him, and will find others if I can. I am told that he is a shy man, and I saw a sort of tremulous, nervous excitability in him, together with great fire and force of expression. But I dare say the shyness would not appear when you saw him in the chair of the British Association; for it very often happens that mere social shyness does not follow a man into public life or molest him when he has something serious to do."

It seems strange to me now that I did not seek and pursue and improve the opportunities of which, at this time, I appear to have had such a friendly offer. I wish there were more reason why it should seem strange. But the retrospect of life swarms with lost opportunities.

It is, to my mind, one of the greatest triumphs of photography, and of Mrs. Cameron's gift in that kind, that Sir John Herschel's face, wanting nothing of the truth and force of my father's description, has been perpetuated, so

that future generations, as well as the present, may see it as he saw it, in all its grandeur and dignity.

On the 3d July, 1850, comes a letter to my father, with a notice of another celebrated man:

"I am writing within earshot of the military band which is playing at St. James's Palace, as usual on a levée day; and all the people are attending the levée in their gay clothes, while, on the other side of Whitehall, Sir Robert Peel is lying a corpse; for he died last night at eleven o'clock. I should think there must be a gloom over the queen and court, for certainly there is over the town. He has always been said to be a man of few personal attachments, and more admired and respected than beloved—a cold and unconfiding man; but people's feelings on the death of such a man are in proportion rather to his public importance than to his attaching qualities, and his death seems to be strongly felt. In my estimation, though he was not a great man, he was a very important man, and it is difficult to say what the country may not suffer by his loss."

In May, 1850, I paid a visit to the old people at Witton, the last in which I found and left them both living; and I wrote to Mrs. E. Villiers: "My father is in his seventy-eighth year, my mother in her eightieth; the action of the mind vigorous in both. Hers a light and elastic vigor; his accompanied with some excitement, which must be trying in old age. I trust to my constitutional indolence for giving *me* a sleepy old age, if I live to be very old."

In the August following my father had an illness indicating disease of the heart, and perhaps apoplectic or paralytic tendencies. He recovered a fair measure of health before the end of the month; and my mother, too, seemed to recover from the shock to her nerves, and their usual frame of mind and habits of life were resumed for some

few weeks more. But the blow had been struck. When my father suffered another seizure, heart disease, with violent spasmodic asthma, were suddenly developed in my mother; so that, for the time, her life seemed in even more immediate danger than his.

What happened to him is described in a characteristic note made in his pocket-book.

November 4th.—"I consider myself to have had a slight general paralytic affection for some days; fingers numb; letting things drop; and can neither button nor tie a knot without repeated failures. Jane thinks my voice and speech altered. I have not yet detected failure of intellect; but as the eye seeth not itself, so the perceptive faculty cannot judge of its own state."

In the following month their doctor was of opinion that either of them might be expected to die at any moment; but in the event it proved that my father's death alone was imminent.

The days of December, when both he and my mother were expecting their death, presented an aspect which I should imagine is not common on such occasions. The physical phenomena were no doubt ordinary enough, or only otherwise inasmuch as they were coincident and almost identical in husband and wife. For my father, as death approached, suffered as well as my mother from disease of the heart and spasmodic asthma, though till within three or four days of his death he had intervals of peace, lasting sometimes for hours, while my mother's struggles for breath were almost incessant, hardly ever intermitting for more than an hour at a time. Both, when able to speak, spoke in their usual tone, and without any depression of spirits. My father I described as "clear-headed, clear in memory, easy and fluent in conversation, talking as well as he ever did on literary and scientific subjects,

quoting passages in poetry, animated without being excited." The next day I wrote that he had had a dreadful night, passed in struggles which I had thought it almost impossible that he should survive: "He catches at every hope of death being hastened.... He is kind and thoughtful for everybody in the intervals when his sufferings are not all-powerful, seldom passing an hour without some token of care and kindness for one person or another."

On the following day "the great step has been taken of making my mother acquainted with the more immediate danger in which my father stands since the last two days, and of allowing her, as indeed she would not be forbidden, to frequent his room at times, and necessarily, therefore, to witness what he suffers from time to time in his spasms. And she has taken all so quietly that I doubt now whether his death will be hers. While she was prevented from seeing him, and she saw there was a mystery in the matter, she suffered more from terrors than she suffered afterwards from seeing the worst. So true is it that—

"'Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings.'

Her spirits do not seem bad, in general. There is nothing of the depression I recollect in her some fifteen years ago, after her mother's death, when a sort of nervous fever was upon her for four or five months.... It seems strange, but we are not without some gleams of mirth. My mother and I had always been used to laugh at my father's particularities, and it amused him to be laughed at, and this is not quite over even now. It is strange, too, how strong the hold is that literature and science have upon him still. After Dr. Green had seen him the day succeeding that terrible Monday night, I was in the dining-room hearing what Green had to say, and as I do not

leave him for long together I went up twice to see what was going on. My mother was with him. The first time, I came upon something he was telling her about 'the boy Ascanius;' the second time he was speculating upon the reasons of breathing being easier with sound than without, and considering how the action of the respiratory muscles, which are such simply, may be aided by calling into action the set of respiratory muscles which produce sound."

The only fear which entered into the feelings of either of them was my mother's, that she might die before my father. Her chief anxiety was that my father should die first, not knowing what would become of him on losing her, if he should be the survivor. Her wish was granted. He died on the 2d January, 1851. She, though health and strength were utterly at an end, and she could never again walk more than a few steps at a time, lived on for two and a half years, and died on the 12th April, 1853, in the eighty-fourth year of her age.

During the earlier and some other portions of this remainder of life her difficulty in breathing made oral intercourse distressing to her, and she preferred to live in solitude and maintain a loving intercourse with us by letter. And her letters are not only as ardently affectionate as in her better days, but, all her bodily and mental sufferings notwithstanding, they have the same character of liveliness, sagacity, and strength. My own interest in them is, of course, such as no one else can feel; but I believe that portions of them will not be lost upon those to whom human nature is interesting, seen in the weakness of disease and extreme old age, and in the strength which death only can defeat. And, having this belief, I will close this chapter with extracts from those of them which were written in 1851, the eighty-second year of her age.

Her brother, General Mills, had been devoted to her in earlier life, but he had felt deeply aggrieved by her marriage when early life was past, and had lived in more or less alienation from her ever since. My father's death, and the approach of death to himself and to her, had brought back the old love:

"He is full of affection and tenderness towards me now. Often have I been convinced that one never should use expressions during the hateful period of resentment that can wound the pride or vanity of the offender in a degree that never dies away. Natural love will naturally return."

Willington, where he lived, was not many miles from Witton; but the state of his health incapacitated him for moving, and he urged her to leave her solitary abode and live with him. There were probably more objections than one, but there was one of a prevailing force:

15*th January.* "I feel sure, if I was at Willington, the general would be all kindness and indulgence; only one thing he would be for overruling me in. It would half kill him if he could not get to my funeral; and as Witton is so far off, he would wish it to be at Branccpeth, and have it there in spite of me, saying,

> "'Earth to earth, and dust to dust,
> Here's a hole, and in you must,'

as when the birds, mice, etc., were to be interred in the orchard in our younger days."

Soon, however, as her brother's sufferings increased and her own intermitted, her resolution was shaken.

To Alice, 22*d January.* "I cannot but be very thankful for even a short relief from pain, but I am no way anxious for a continuance of life. I cannot look in the face of any future life upon earth without unutterable anguish of mind; but with God all things are possible,

and he can order it otherwise. So I rest my cares upon him. My dear brother at Willington has had a fresh attack of illness; but he still wishes a union in the same habitation; and, poor man, I don't think I can refuse him should it be in my power to comply. At present he is in the worst state of the two; so, as yet, I cannot form any plan at all, but must be as a thing uprooted and driven about by the wind, and, as far as self is concerned, scarcely feeling a preference to place or companion, beyond what leaves me most in quiet and alone, where I may commune with myself in my chamber and be still. . . . Kiss the dear young ones for me over and over again, and the old one too, if you will; for nothing on earth is now dearer to me—so much of what I have lost."

In her next letter she alludes to a little specimen of Charles Spring Rice's drollery which I had repeated to her. His brother Aubrey and Charles and I were dining at their father's house, to which Aubrey had just returned on quitting his first curacy. I asked Aubrey how he had got on in his parish; on which Charles leaned across, interposing in an undertone—"Oh! have you not heard? Great success—subscription of the parishioners—silver egg-spoon."

Her letter was in answer to one in which I had told her that some one, desiring to do honor to my father, had sent me an obituary notice, asking me to contribute to it, and I had replied that any public notice of him would have been contrary to his habitual feelings, but, if any were to be published, it might be well to mention his "Index Idoneorum," for the chance that any opportunity of printing it should arise.

And on this she writes:

26th February. "My feelings respecting these notices are much the same as yours. They are near connections

of the *piece-of-plate* admirers, and when there is little to be said they are merely egg-spoons. . . . My solitude seems to cause distress among all my friends, thinking their part should be to prevent it; while, in fact, they are better engaged, and in my present suffering state of body and of mind it is all in vain. Solitude is the best and the most comfortable. Do not all the animal creation hide themselves under such circumstances?"

In the following month of March her brother died. I adverted to their recent reconciliation as consolatory, and she answered that she felt all those consolations and had dwelt upon them as such. "Yet they soften the heart, making it more tender to the stroke of separation." Then she spoke of a relative, whose help had been most valuable to her brother in his last days, as it had formerly been to herself. "Her attendance must have given support to her afflicted cousins. They are diffident and she is confident; they are soft and overpowered, she is usefully hard; but not so as to prevent her giving aid with all the thought and all the affection that can be required. . . . My dear Robert! never were a brother and sister more tenderly attached; and latterly how the revival overflowed in all his frequent little notes, and I could not get to see him. . . . My generation is fast passing away; and though it seems strange that I am thus left, so long have I looked with anxiety to the tottering lives that are gone, that the departures were partly time-worn ere they took place. . . . Bell often says to me" (Bell was her maid), "'I am sure any one of these things would have killed you a year or two ago.' And why they do not kill me now, when I am more than half dead, *is* very wonderful. Weeks and months of sleepless nights do not kill me; everything I look upon gives me pain and does not kill me; every thought that comes into my head is as a dagger to my heart, and yet in

a degree guarded as it used not to be. The only agreeable sensation I have felt was when dreaming of a dog. I have loved them in my little short sleeps with old feelings; but I would not like to have one now. If I were to die now, who would take it?"

The death of her sister, Mrs. Nesfield, had followed almost immediately on that of her brother, and (probably owing to the renewed shocks) her suffering from want of breath had been again severe.

16*th April.* "I have slept more the last two nights, panting and groaning aloud all the time, and knowing it. But dreams make me know that I do sleep. If, as you think, dreams show my powers of loving and enjoyment with my dogs, they certainly do not my bodily powers; for I dream of running and most youthful doings, totally out of my power for life. Such delight and scampering and frolic with old Mungo I had the other night, meeting him at the front door at Willington; and he no less delighted, and we talked together and were so loving. I have not thought of this dog for half a century, I should think. . . . I have heard it remarked that kind nature generally made the sleep of the unhappy to carry them quite away from their waking thoughts, that their sleep might be refreshing. I now, whenever I sleep, dream of your father, but merely the common daily matter of our life here, when no illness was in our thoughts."

In May the daughter of the sister she had lost came to see her, and the meeting of the two mourners is described:

"Her natural, simple manner allows me to see exactly what her feelings are; and though it is perhaps the first deep-felt sorrow she has yet known, it comes from a happy sort of mind, with a great flow of animal spirits ready to rise between the pangs of regret; and they will ere long

get the mastery of the common lot of mankind, especially as there was every circumstance of comfort attending the departure of her who was indeed much to poor May, and who will be sadly missed for a time—her companion, her counsellor, her occupation. The vacant room, the awakening anguish of returning thought—all these things she feels as others have felt; but they are new to her and they will all pass away, and all places will be filled again by her dear children and her husband. In these dear ties she feels herself happy, and she enjoys being here, and she talks and laughs with all the heartiness of early days."

I had had occasional glimpses of this niece of my mother's when she was a child or a very young girl, and the freshness and brightness of her nature had lent a charm to every glimpse, as she had known none but little troubles in those days, and Landor's Ianthe was not more light-hearted—

> "O'er you, Ianthe, little troubles pass,
> Like little ripples down a sunny river;
> Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,
> Cut down, and up again as blithe as ever"—

and in the July of this year I met her again when I was on my way from Witton, and stopped at her house to give an account of my mother to her remaining sister, Mrs. Britton, several years older than her very old self, but, by a law of her being, invincible in the *enjoyment* of life, let time and tide do what they would. I wrote to my mother after my visit, 6th July: "I found the people at Eastfield all in good plight; Mrs. Britton looked like an aged Euphrosyne or an octogenarian Hebe—her face beaming with happiness and occasionally with mirth. It was a pleasure to see her. But the pleasure of all pleasures was to see little May again, who looked and laughed so like her little self, that if it had not been thirty years too late I

thought I should have fallen in love with her on the spot."

Mrs. Cameron, though she had barely seen my mother at Tunbridge Wells, and had never, I think, spoken to her, could not hear of her sufferings without endeavors to alleviate them, by providing her with one appliance or another for giving comfort and relief in sickness, and my mother writes:

22*d May.* "I think I might have found good Mrs. Cameron's loving letter difficult to answer; and though I have a sort of scruple, as if it was rather wicked to refuse kindness and charitable love, yet I cannot help being glad that you saved me all feeling about it. As to that horrid race of pictures,* never send another. I have one of you. M—— was one day saying that that taken from your bust was by far the most like you of any picture she had seen of you. I was numbering them and mentioned the above-named horror. She asked, 'What is it like?' and I answered, according to the first suggestion of my mind, 'Like a dying idiot.' She was almost choked with laughter, and made me seek it everywhere till I found it; and she was astonished at the likeness to what you appeared one morning after sitting up all night in distress. We showed it to Bell, and she exclaimed—'Oh! how very like Mr. Henry one morning when he had been sitting up all night.' I have felt more respect for the thing since that."

By the month of July she had so far improved in health that it seemed possible she might be able, sooner or later, to travel, and we again urged her to take up her abode with us.

14*th July.* "A thousand thanks to you and dear Alice

* They were photographs, but not Mrs. Cameron's. Her practice of photography was begun many years later.

for all your kind thoughts of me, and, above all, for your desire to have the care of a troublesome, dying old woman, whose state is that she seems incapable of either living or dying, sticking between the two."

Then she adverts to the wish of Mrs. Britton and her relations in Yorkshire that she should live with them.

"When capable of enjoying society I should have it in Mrs. Britton and my niece. . . . May Darley would be a great deal to me; she is old enough for me and also young enough. I think the old assort well with the old. The very young cannot sympathize with what they never felt and what is so different from themselves. They may compassionate age, but it is incomprehensible to them, and frequently appears ridiculous and fanciful. The old, from remembrance, can and often do sympathize with the young; but their experience only mortifies if it is believed. So that I think the old should go together. . . . It is only illness or affliction that prevents my still liking the young, and even children, for my company. But that day is past. I can no more be anything to anybody but a burden to exercise their charity; and I am willing to be that; and I feel perfectly assured that neither you nor Alice would grudge it me, either in my present state or after you are both disappointed in your expectations of my appearing comfortable under everything that can be done to make me so. Sickness and death overrule everything. Don't imagine I write in low spirits. My cheerfulness deceives every one, I believe. . . . I dare not think much of the chances of seeing all of you, or, indeed, any of you, again; but it is a comfort to think I am no way necessary to the well-being of any one; and though I may well indeed be satisfied with the kind affection of many, even beyond the lot of most old women, I may yet slide out of the world without occasioning more than just a sad farewell. . . .

I know your room is everything a room can be; but pain makes all rooms alike, and speechlessness makes all society pretty much the same; only for the invaluable knowledge that hearts are in unison, though tongues can't tell it; for hearts will find a thousand ways to express themselves."

Another attack succeeded, and she was apparently at the point of death; but in August she had rallied once more, and she writes with her usual animation: "—— is neither old enough nor young enough for me. I like the vivacity of youth and the ripeness of age. There is often a dulness between that makes me impatient; and there are those who never have either youth or age, and that is dulness throughout." And of our children she says: "They all came too late for me, except that they give the future, when I think of the days that are coming and when I cannot see them, a richness and a hope that is very valuable to me, compared with the vacancy I used to contemplate for you and Henry." And then, adverting to the renewed question whether she might not take up her abode with us, she adds: "My love is with you and my thoughts and my prayers; but my poor body is here for the present, if not till the resurrection. . . . I have been as attentive to my own health and experience as if I much wished to live. That I am turned to stone has perhaps been in my favor as to continued life. Was not Niobe turned to a stone statue by her affliction in all her children being killed by lightning? I never thought of this; but I do believe that it is a case that has been before mine. At any rate my heart has beaten itself to pieces, and I could never say where it was, it was so often out of its usual place. Perhaps it may be quite quiet soon."

In August Miss Fenwick had joined us at Mortlake, and it was to her the next letter was written: "I have not yet

lost my memory; and it seems to bring you all three before me, seated and conversing together; the dear little ones playing about you; in short, all that is dearest to me now left in the world. And yet I should be as one not belonging to you, so little is there left of me. It is strange that a few old letters had got out of the way of the general conflagration, and at the end of one this met my eye: 'I pity everything that loves. What a field of misery does it open. How seldom does one hear of two friends dying at the same time. But if you die first I think I could not long survive; or if my body survived, my mind would fly off in search of its kindred spirit.' Now here I am, several months after this severe stroke, still in a manner surviving, though my body hourly crumbling away and only bones left. My mind has taken no flight; it is conscious that it cannot of itself reach its kindred spirit, and it seems turned into stone and dropped by its own weight upon the cold, unsympathizing earth, while my friends all remain kind to me, and naturally think that their affection might recall something of my former self. If I could be anything, mind or body, that I was a year ago, their society would, indeed, be a restorative; but constant uneasiness precludes almost everything else. I cannot enter into any conversation, and everything wearies me. But, thank God, I can read some books with interest, and I can feel a grateful thankfulness to my gracious heavenly Father on the frequent remembrance of pain no longer suffered, and a desire to submit myself in pious resignation to his will in all things."

Next comes a letter from me to her: "The principal event of the week has been the appearance of Bessie, born Tudor, otherwise Mrs. Thorpe, who spent the day with us on Sunday, along with Mrs. Tudor and Dossie. It was a strange sort of sight to me after sixteen years of separa-

tion. The difference in her was, that whereas she looked like a child sixteen years ago, she looked now like a woman of seven-and-twenty, being in reality ten years older than that. I felt as if my old fondness for her had been lying at compound interest all these years, and that a great sum of it had come to hand at once. It is odd that the two persons whom I had the greatest fancy for as children and girls should come across me again this summer, within a few weeks, after so many years of absence, and that both of them should appear in their own likeness, and bring back upon me with so much force what I felt about them formerly. May's face was the more altered of the two, but the manner and expression was so perfectly the same that the alteration did not tell. Bessie's face, though somewhat altered, was rather more than less pretty, and she too was all herself."

In September she writes of Miss Fenwick: ". . . I have been wishing all this week to be with her, and yet that might be the very worst thing for her. Though few people have had more sympathy in each other's sorrows, we have as different a constitution in these things as can be found; for I can be wretched without being low-spirited, and she can be low-spirited without being wretched. I wake in the morning (when fortunate enough to have been asleep) with an aching dread of life upon me, and yet I go through the day in a way that no one would imagine but that life was as agreeable to me as to themselves."

And she writes to Alice: "My love is always with you, and I will tell you so as long as I have the power to speak and write." Her orchard had been robbed, and she says she could very well spare the apples, and the robbery saves her having them gathered to give away. "But still I would subdue the rogues, if possible. Bell enjoyed going about with an old brush covered with tar and daubing all

the accessible places; for she is, as an old woman of Willington used to say, in vitriol against rogues—meaning inveterate. . . . I continue to look worse and worse, though I really feel better; and I eat a great deal more, and grow more and more like a skeleton; great veins lying in all directions upon the bones and kept down by skin only; a hideous sight, walking about and seeing and hearing like a living thing. . . . I am so glad that you do like Marion Brown and May Darley; it is, indeed, very pleasant to me, for it shows me, though I did not doubt it, how ready you are to be kind in your welcome to Henry's early fancies—a strong proof of love, and love of the best kind. You have won their affections, dear Alice; and if mine had not been won before, this would have won them. . . . I find from Lady Milbanke they are all extremely anxious to persuade me to set out, first being taken upon a mattress by men to the station, then put into an express carriage, not to stir out till I reach York, then in their own little carriage, five miles turnpike to Eastfield; and the next thing must be to be put into a hearse and carried to Bossal, and then everybody having done their duty by me, and I being undoubtedly in heaven, all may be happy. Certainly the last remove would make all the others of small concern to me. But what *ifs* there are in the way."

7th November. ". . . I remember one of the most miserable days of my childhood was after telling my mother of the nurserymaid's carelessness in letting the baby put a nut into his mouth when she was cracking them for herself. My mother was, of course, very angry with her, and nothing could console me or dry my eyes for days afterwards, nothing could soothe my feelings in any way, but Jenny's soft voice of pity for me, and just saying, 'Then you should not have told of me.' No anger could Jenny

ever feel towards me, and I loved her dearly, and, notwithstanding all the love that has since dwelt in my heart for others, shall I ever forget that which I felt for Jenny."

16*th November.* "Your account of Isabella Fenwick alarms me. I have seen a great falling off in her state for a long time now, and I fear a gradual decline of all her powers. The word '*emaciated*' cannot surely belong to her; yet it quite stabbed me to the heart when I read it. . . . I had a note from Mrs. Britton this morning. What a wonderful old lady she is—so fresh in mind. She enjoys her books as much as any age can do. Divinity is her favorite study; but she is richly stored with information on many subjects, and carries all on with a continued thread of reflection, uniting them in one highway towards futurity. Her knowledge does not, like that of many ladies, lie in neat, clean heaps in their granary, but it is sown and reaped and given for food, and often yields novelties by cultivation."

I was shortly enabled to relieve her from her fears about Miss Fenwick, who was restored before the end of 1851, not to health, indeed, or to anything like it, but to a condition in which no fatal change was imminent.

And now, much as I cling to this last correspondence with my stepmother, I must leave it for a while and write of other things.

Chapter VIII.

AUTUMNAL CHANGES.—AUBREY DE VERE SWERVING TOWARDS ROME.—"THE WISE WOMAN BUILDETH HER HOUSE."—SIR JOHN PAKINGTON.—ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.—LORD AND LADY JOHN RUSSELL.—NEWSPAPERS.—LADY HATHERTON.—WITTON ONCE MORE.—MY MOTHER'S LETTERS AGAIN.—THE FUNERAL OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.—MY MOTHER'S DEATH.—MISS FENWICK'S LAST YEARS AND DEATH.

Anno Dom. 1851–52. Anno Æt. 51–52.

On my birthday, 18th October, 1851, Miss Fenwick wrote to me with all the ardor of her old affection, and I answered her from the Grange:

"Love is always strong in you, whatever else fails; and I am grateful that you have all that love to give, as well as grateful for getting it. My birthday (autumnal as those days are now in more ways than one) came this year after one of the happiest and most untroubled summers that I can recollect to have spent; and I have some difficulty in making out that fifty-one years have brought me more of inward age than thirty or forty did. I have written no verse for the last year or two, which looks like an effect of advancing years; and the entries in my commonplace book are few, from which I gather that I see less of what is new and strange in the world and that I am not visited by fresh and felicitous thoughts. But less of solitude may account for this, as well as decay of susceptibility. Perhaps, too, business may have had a larger share of my mind, Stephen no longer standing as a breakwater between me and the tide of affairs. . . . Aubrey de Vere has come

to London on his way to Rome, whither he is accompanied by Manning. He writes of himself as making up the accounts of his studies and meditations. With a mind like his, the more the study and meditation the less the chance of just thinking. Such minds stand in need of being simplified; and the more they think the more they are complicated. Nevertheless, it is right and necessary that his mind should work according to his nature, and abide by the results."

In the previous year (that of the Gorham controversy), while these meditations of Aubrey's had been going on, he and I had corresponded on the subject of them; and the letters, though too long to find room here, may find it, perhaps, in a volume of my correspondence, if such a volume should be produced. In a letter written to some one else, I spoke of his meditations as gyrations of the wounded bird, not of the bird that soars. I did not anticipate that he could find rest and satisfaction in the church to which he seemed to be gravitating. In this I was mistaken; he *has* found peace and happiness in that church. In my commonplace book, at a later period, I find a note of a conversation between Alice and John Walpole. Walpole had quoted Dr. Manning as having said that in the Church of Rome he had found completeness and rest. But Alice replied that to find completeness and rest is to find the wrong thing; inasmuch as a finite being can only find completeness in infinite truth by dwarfing it to his own stature. However this may be, as Aubrey found the church in which his "soul was satisfied" we ought to rejoice. His conversion was a loss to us, no doubt, but the friendship had been interwoven with almost every thread of Alice's life, and for ten or twelve years with many threads of mine; and whatever was lost to it, enough was left to

give vitality to twenty friendships of a less tenacious texture.

We had now lived about eight years by the river-side at Mortlake; but we began to doubt whether the situation suited the children in point of health. Some land abutting upon Sheen Common came into the market on easy terms; the site was in all respects eligible; and I had other motives also for buying and building. Under ordinary circumstances, when I had money to spare (which seldom happened), it had been my way to be content with the most unenterprising of all investments. On one occasion I wrote: "The money is going into good old consols. I believe the good old creature to be in a course of very gradual decay, owing to gold discoveries past and to come; and I believe land to be in progress of continual enhancement, owing to increase of population and agricultural improvements; but I give the preference to consols for the sake of convenience. It is a stupid old drudge, which does its work in a quiet way and gives no trouble; and, in my estimation, there is no greater merit than that." But, in 1852, when a house in a more healthy situation was wanted, I applied what money I had in consols to provide one.*

* When I have said that *I* did this or that with my money, "I" should be understood as personified by Alice. The charge of money and the dealing with it has always been a trouble and inconvenience to me, and in the first week of the honeymoon I transferred them to Alice. It was an unreasonable proceeding, for I knew next to nothing of her then, but it has proved to be the best thing I could have done for others as well as for myself; and though it was the transference of a burden, I do not think it was a heavy one to her. When my eldest daughter was a young girl, another young girl who lived near us at Sheen said to her, "For Heaven's sake, Nell, don't let us give up being helpless and foolish; my mother did long ago, and she has always had to carry her carpet-bag herself." Alice has had to carry her own carpet-bag, but it has been com-

The house was designed by Alice, and completed in June, 1853, and, whether to live in or to let, it has done a great deal more than answer every purpose that could be expected of it. In health and wealth and comfort we have profited by it largely; and the text that the "wise woman buildeth her house," which was not at all believed in by many of our friends at the outset of our undertaking, was abundantly verified and acknowledged in the issue.

In February, 1852, there had been a change of government, with the pressure upon persons in my position which is usual on such occasions.

I wrote to Miss Fenwick: "This change of government is exceedingly troublesome to me. I am very sorry to lose Lord Grey—the most laborious, able, public-spirited, and honest-minded of the eleven secretaries of state under whom I have served, and to me personally the most friendly of any, except Lord Aberdeen.* But that is not all. You may imagine the bewilderment of the new men stepping into the wilderness of affairs in the colonial

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paratively light in hand, and the contents are worth twice what they would have been in the hands of any one else.

* Lord Grey for many years of his after life performed the part of a clear-sighted and sagacious observer and critic of the political proceedings of others, but with far less of participation in them than was to be desired for the good of the country. He is a man of strong opinions, conscientiously and tenaciously maintained, and he has fallen upon times when co-operation and compromise for the purposes of co-operation have become indispensable elements of political power in its most active and effective exercise—that is, in office. An independent bystander with a high political position and reputation may, no doubt, perform services of importance to the country, and these have not been wanting; but to those who have the measure of Lord Grey's practical and administrative gifts and faculties, the loss the country has suffered by his too scrupulous inflexibility is matter of great regret.

office, without any experience of public affairs in any office whatever. The appointment of Sir John Pakington has been treated with very general ridicule; and I wish he had been still more unknown than he is; for then one could better conceive that something new had been discovered in the way of a capable man; but he seems to be just known enough in the House of Commons to make people believe that they have the measure of him, and that he comes short. The little I have had an opportunity of seeing of him would not lead me to think him anything more or less than a man of sense. I am afraid that is far from being a man of sufficiency for the office of secretary for the colonies; but it is very possible he may prove to be more, and much more likely he should prove more than less. So I wait to see. In the meantime, I have the prospect of hard labor either way."

Hard labor notwithstanding, I found time for a little dissipation.

"I have been rather social lately; and I even went so far as to stay a night in town, and go to a party at Lord John Russell's, where I met the Archbishop of York, looking like a plain, strong, secular man of the two-bottle orthodoxy school, quite as earthly a man as I had expected, but more considerable and robust in character, unaffected, and wholly undisturbed and unperplexed by any aspirations after anything better than he is. Rather like a man of the last century, when nothing better was expected or thought of. A better meeting was with Lady Lotty Elliot, the one of the Minto Elliots who is now about the age that her elder sisters were when I first knew them, some sixteen or eighteen years ago. Lady Lotty made me feel as if my youth had come back to me, and I was losing my young heart to a Lady Somebody Elliot once more. They are a fine set of girls and women

those Minto Elliots, full of literature and poetry and nature; and Lady John, whom I knew best in former days, is still very attractive to me; and now that she is relieved from the social toils of a first minister's wife, I mean to renew and improve my relations with her, if she has no objection.

"After Lord John Russell's resignation, I gave her such views of the state of parties and the policy of the opposition as I had been enabled to gather and form after a good deal of talk with Lords Aberdeen, Monteagle, and other old politicians, and I expressed a doubt whether Lord John was so interwoven personally with numerous men of his party as to be able to hold it together with the requisite amount of discipline when official authority was at an end. She answered that official authority had its own difficulties, and that, as to a party and party friends, she longed for the days when everything had seemed wholly good or wholly bad, and the only question she had asked was, 'Was he good or was he naughty?'

"She is very interesting to me, as having kept herself pure from the world, with a fresh and natural and not ungifted mind in the world's most crowded ways. I recollect, some years ago, in going through the heart of the City, somewhere behind Cheapside, to have come upon the courtyard of an antique house, with grass and flowers and green trees growing as quietly as if it was the garden of a farmhouse in Northumberland. Lady John reminds me of it.

"Lord John, I find, has undertaken to edit the posthumous papers of Anacreon Moore.... As far as I can judge, he is taking a wrong course in politics; but 'as far as I can judge' is but a little way. His undertaking this literary task looks as if he did not expect to be in office

again very soon; and I doubt much whether he will be again at the head of a government—not because he is less fit for it than the other men who are forthcoming in these days, but because a government formed from more parties than one will require a more neutral head."

In the spring of 1852 our boy caught scarlet fever, and his mother, in nursing him through it (she did not allow any servant to enter the room) caught it herself. It was somewhat severe in both cases: and, when they were able to travel, she took the boy to St. Leonard's-on-Sea, the *locus in quo* of our marriage thirteen years before. I was to follow in due season; and on the 4th May, Alice wrote:

"You shall be as little sad here as I can help. 'The sweet years' have 'insensibly gone by,' and stolen from us perhaps as much as they have given; but shall we not be satisfied? I am not sad here. I thought I could not have borne it; but expected sadness, like expected joy, does not come. I have been reduced in mind as well as in body, and am become again like a little child for a little time. Small things are much to me, and I can laugh and cry, and forget all about it directly. The sea, too, is very companionable; and for hours I can sit and listen to it and watch its perpetual motion and be content with the sweet, serious idleness; and the little ones are a great joy to me. . . ."

5th May. ". . . I was out for two hours this afternoon with the little girls. We took two donkey chairs, one for them and one for me, and away we went over the downs; and spring was in the air—the gorse was in full blossom, the hedges full of primroses, and the larks could not contain themselves for joy. And very beautiful it all seemed to me, and I was very comfortable, though as languid as the horse-chestnut leaves, which seemed as if they were fainting in the warm air."

I went down to see her for a day or two from time to time, and after one of my visits she writes:

"I think I must be in an unusually happy mood. Yesterday the day was charming in itself, and I had you. To-day we have had a cold drizzle all the afternoon, and you are away; and yet I am very light-hearted and merry still. Does this hurt your feelings? Should you like me to tell you that the place is a desert without you, and so on? Or shall you comfort yourself by thinking that I am happy because Saturday will soon be here and bring you back?"

I was living in Mrs. Villiers's house in London. She was at Grove Mill, and I only saw her in occasional visits; and I lived for the most part a somewhat solitary life, thus described in a letter to Miss Fenwick:

"As for my London life, I have spent most of my evenings alone at Rutland Gate; and if I had not I know not how I should have got through what I have had to do. I do not know why I should have so much less time now than in former years, but it seems wonderful to me that I ever could have found time to write plays and verses or to read books.* I hardly ever read books now, except the manuscripts which my friends send me to read and revise before they are printed, and this I do as part of my business in life which must be got through. But for voluntary occupation it seems as if I had none—not even the taking up of a newspaper—sometimes for weeks together."

During much of my youth and earlier middle age I neglected the newspapers. It was an unwise neglect, and it deprived me of a species of knowledge which no one who has anything to do with mankind can afford to dis-

* I was forgetful. James Stephen here or James Stephen there made all the difference.

pense with. The newspapers of those days were very different from the newspapers of these; but while there were some attributes of the newspaper press, belonging to past rather than to present times, which turned me away from it, there were also attributes common to both times which struck upon certain inaptitudes of my intellectual nature. It is the business of a newspaper to give the earliest possible intelligence, and it is the aim of a newspaper to take effect upon its readers by expressing opinions on what is passing with boldness and confidence. The necessary result is that opinions are expressed on imperfect knowledge, and with a confidence that is premature; and the further result is that the bias of a premature commitment pervades the opinions to be expressed upon accruing knowledge. It does not suit a newspaper to say, "We were a little hasty when we said this or that, and it now appears we were wrong." They never do say it. They back out of the opinion under some disguise, or they plunge on in it, new knowledge notwithstanding. The nature of my mind was not alone duly averse from audacious advances and disguised retreats; it was *un*duly averse from partial knowledge and provisional opinions. The measure of superficial knowledge which is required to let in the light upon deeper knowledge is not easily to be estimated in the case of any mind; but in the case of every mind it is a large measure. And still more difficult is it to apportion the measure of diffidence or confidence with which superficial knowledge and its offspring in opinion should be entertained.

But my distaste for the newspaper press of the times I speak of was not intellectual only. The spirit which pervaded it was a spirit generated by the corruptions of irresponsible power. Political parties in those days being divided by what they called principles, and indeed by

what were really principles in a derivative sense, the *odium politicum* partook of the same intensity and intolerance which is usually ascribed to the *odium theologicum;* and political warfare was waged with a personal rancor which could put on the mask of devotion to a so-called sacred cause. From this resulted a habit and a license and allowance which extended far beyond the political arena, and a tendency on the part of the public and of juries to confound the tyranny of the press with the freedom of the press.

To the tyranny of the press as it reigned in the days when parties were really, as well as nominally, divided by principles, I had a heartfelt aversion. It was a tyranny not "tempered by assassination," as it seems to be at the present time (1875) in Italy; nor by the restraints of a sanguinary code of honor, then falling fast into desuetude. The pistol was laid aside; the horsewhip may have flourished for a season; but it was manifestly still more impotent to adjust differences, according to any rule of right, than the pistol. Southey supplied me with an example. It happened to Coleridge, he told me—it was probably when Coleridge was a very young man—to be insulted in an article by an editor. He went to the office of the newspaper with horsewhipping intentions; and on asking for the editor he was civilly shown into a back room and requested to wait. He waited for some time in more or less patient expectation of his victim. At length the door opened, and a prizefighter of huge dimensions presented himself, saying, "Sir, *I* am the editor."

The power of the press is still to a great extent irresponsible power; but it is exercised by a different order of men, and tempered by a different tone of public opinion. When political differences were no longer extreme, virulence of personal invective was more rarely indulged

in by writers, and began to be less acceptable to readers. Even now my acquaintance with the press is limited (for I belong to no club except one, which only meets to dine), and I am not free from some doubt whether, were it more extensive, my admiration of the abilities of its writers would be accompanied by an equal admiration of their candor and good-feeling. I have sometimes asked persons who are better informed than myself whether there is one *good-natured* newspaper; and the answers were not reassuring. But where there is not good-nature there cannot be a high order of good-breeding. I fully believe the writers in the principal newspapers to be gentlemen in private life; and if they divest themselves of a careful consideration for the feelings of others, it is, I dare say, only when they are persuaded that their public duty demands the disregard. I can only hope that they find it an unpleasant duty; and that as the press, and public sentiment along with it, reaches a still higher elevation, it will appear to them that they give themselves unnecessary pain, and that public duty and personal kindness and courtesy are compatible. When, in the continual growth and increase of generous sentiment and aspiration, this compatibility shall be widely recognized, the press will take the rank among our teaching and governing instrumentalities which some of its present members are well fitted to adorn, and will occupy a position of dignity as well as power. When that day comes, could I but live to see it, it may be that I should turn to my morning paper with the feelings with which a disciple of Zoroaster turns to the morning sun; perhaps even be able to understand the feelings of a friend of Aubrey de Vere's, who, according to Aubrey, when he perceived that his much valued *Times* had been mutilated by some small excision, was as angry and indignant as if some one "had

plunged a rash hand into the affluent tresses of his bride."

I think I had begun to read the newspapers habitually long before this year of 1852, and my letter to Miss Fenwick had something more to say of the occupations through which, for the moment, no newspapers could make their way:

"I suppose the claims upon a man's time gather and accumulate as he proceeds in life, till the time when he becomes notoriously useless and inefficient. But I have no reason to complain; for almost all the occupations which fall to my lot are interesting to me, and the only drawback is that I am seldom free from the sense of some obligations unfulfilled. My proofs have pressed upon me lately, for I do not like to publish new editions without very careful revision, though very little correction perhaps. 'Van Artevelde' is done, and will be out next week. 'Edwin' is only just begun. I have also been busy with a MS. of Lord Grey's; and with Spedding's 'Bacon.'"

Alice rejoined me before the end of May, and in July I paid a visit to my mother at Witton. She had been suffering less than in the last year, but was very weak. "I can move about the room a little with support," she says, on the 9th of July; and soon after she was able to sit out of doors. The plundering boys and youths of the village had been tearing down the walls and demolishing her shrubs, and the policeman was of too tame a temper to give much assistance to her maid, the sturdy and indignant "Bell." She writes:

"The want of courage in the lower classes now is the root of much evil. I always call it *timidity*, which has a great effect, because that word has been applied chiefly to a quality that is odious to mankind; and finery in the

ladies I call vulgarity, which is an odious word to the fair sex; and, as I am considered somewhat wise, and 'to know both the rich and the poor,' though lying here unable to bark or bite, I have some weapons of defence." And a few days after it appears "the peaceful-mannered policeman threatened to act like a lion. He says Bell is a man in woman's clothes. I asked Bell why she did not retort and say he was a woman in man's clothes."

On my way to Witton, or, rather, a good deal out of my way, I stayed a day or two with Lord and Lady Hatherton, at Teddesley Park. She had (unconsciously) sat to me for her picture in Rosalba, my heroine of the "Sicilian Summer:"

> "In the soft fulness of a rounded grace,
> Noble of stature, with an inward life
> Of secret joy sedate, Rosalba stands,
> As seeing and not knowing she is seen,
> Like a majestic child, without a want.
> She speaks not often, but her presence speaks,
> And is itself an eloquence, which, withdrawn,
> It seems as though some strain of music ceased
> That filled till then the palpitating air
> With sweet pulsations; when she speaks indeed,
> 'Tis like some one voice eminent in the choir,
> Heard from the midst of many, sweetly clear,
> With thrilling singleness, yet just accord.
> So heard, so seen, she moves upon the earth
> Unknowing that the joy she ministers
> Is aught but Nature's sunshine."

When that account of her was written (before 1850) I had known her by little more than her looks. She was then Mrs. Davenport; and I find myself writing to her friend, Lady Langdale, in January, 1852:

"Mrs. Davenport writes me word that she is going to be married. Do you know Lord Hatherton? I do not.... I know very little of Mrs. Davenport, but she is

very interesting to me, and I wish you would tell me something about Lord Hatherton. . . ."

In August I went to Witton, and there I found my mother in extreme muscular weakness, hardly able to walk, but "strong in spirit always, fresh in mind, and capable of taking pleasure in the flowers and the trees and the cats and the dogs, and all that belongs to the place.

"And, indeed," I continued, to Alice, 2d August, "it is a place to be much admired and rejoiced in while dog-day weather lasts, and I have never been more sensible of its charms. The stables were the only questionable feature about the house, being made to wear the appearance of a chapel; and they are now so overgrown that the outline is altogether lost and they imitate nothing but an ivy-tod. The laurels, which my mother is always complaining of, in the sort of way in which a proud mother complains of her great, bouncing, overgrown boys, have overshadowed the approach so much as to turn it green with moss; and the shrubbery on the north is a thicket of laurel and holly and box and thorn, too close for almost a dog to penetrate. The river has been occasionally coming down in a swollen, tawny flood, owing to rains in the west. The Lynnburn is always gentle and placid, let rain fall where it may; and at the castle there is, to my eyes, the most beautiful bit of all, which is a little piece of flower-garden behind the courtyard and bounded by a curving sunk fence, with a wall of loose stones, and just water enough to give rise to some water-plants against the wall, and roses growing all along the top of the sunk fence in deepish grass, a few trees, Portugal laurel, cypress, and sycamore, growing at intervals —a bit of garden-ground just sufficiently neglected to make its beauty romantic, and to harmonize with the

empty castle, which seems to hear hardly any voice but that of its own clock, telling the hours to the gardener and the housekeeper and an occasional wayfarer. I have walked round the castle or near it twice a day; but I should not have said that bit of garden-ground was the most beautiful thing in my eyes; for what has made me so constant to this walk was the chance it gave me of seeing a peasant girl of eleven years of age, who lives in the cottage at the farther end of the bridge. I think I told you two years ago how beautiful she was. She is at a less beautiful age now, perhaps, but there is still a dark radiance about her which made it worth my while to shift my beat from the west road to the bridge road and the castle. . . . It is, I think, the nearest approach to a solitary life that I have made for many years, and it seems to me to quicken the sensibilities, both as regards the absent and the unreal; and I feel affectionate and more or less poetical. Were I to live such a life long, I should have fits of melancholy, perhaps, and be afraid for my nerves, not having youth's confidence in their elasticity. Poetry would be my resource; but that too would work upon the nerves."

Alice seems to have thought that she was forgotten in my life at Witton. What she said I know not, but what I answered was: "No, you have a friend, and no rival, in solitude; for you are seldom more with me than you have been in these woods and highways of Witton-le-Wear these last ten days. And I believe that the presence of the absent is a very serviceable variation from the presence of the present, for occasional lightening up of the more imaginative holes and corners of the affections."

To Miss Fenwick also I gave an account of my walks and meditations at Witton:

"I have not much more business here than I had at

Kelston Knoll, and I wander in the woods and read a little, and try to make up my mind on the question whether, all circumstances of life considered, I am capable enough of poetry to engage in another considerable work. If I were to live at home as I do here I should have less doubt. Solitude would not only throw me upon my resources, but provide them. But, living as I do at Mortlake, with business, family, friends, neighbors, MSS. to read and criticise, letters to write, a house to build, and daily casualties of occupation or interruption to encounter, I do doubt whether poetry is still strong enough in me to make its way and keep its course. It will not come in sallies, jets, and gushes; for that was never much the way of it with me. That is, themes will not come in this way, so that I may ejaculate a song or an ode or a sonnet. If it is to come at all, there must be a place provided for it, that it may set its feet in a large room. If I had the dome of St. Peter's to illuminate, I might hang my lamps in such an order and array as would take the eyes of beholders; but I cannot to any good purpose hang them up each on its own lamp-post. And where is the dome of St. Peter's to be found."

I left Witton early in August, and my mother fell back upon the society of the "inferior creatures mute," whom she so much loved.

In April of this year, when her death was expected to be immediate, she had made pecuniary arrangements for the future care of her cats. To "die and endow a college or a cat" is treated by Pope as if the latter endowment were a subject for satire. My mother's endowment was merely a small sum to an old servant, who would share in the benefit. The cats were mother and son, but the son died before her, after one day's illness, and she writes:

"You did not answer my intricate case about my sweet

Mossy's effects. I consider myself to be trustee in the matter. Who should be his heir? His disconsolate mother still calls him to eat the prey she catches for him, and her yells are quite afflicting, and she has lost her courage. She ran into the house the other day on the sight of a dog near the front door. She follows me about, and I would rather she did not; for I have commenced some curious flirtations with the robins. Two of them call to me out of the bushes; I answer them, and they come to see what I am, and set their pretty eyes on mine; and then they come close to me, and I expect in a few days they will sit on my hand. I used to have all sorts of birds at my feet in old times at the Bower at Willington."

A month after she says: "To-day I tried to direct old Alick about cutting the laurels; but it required too much speaking, and my robin is afraid of everybody but me, though he begins to look kindly on Bell, as she is so much with me. Patie"—this was a horse—" would never bite a woman, for my sake; but no man that put himself in his way was ever spared."

And at a later date: "Janet, our new Scotch damsel, was in the orchard before breakfast yesterday, and my robin flew upon her shoulder; but when it looked up in her face, and, instead of seeing the wrinkles and tear-stained, withered cheeks of its old friend, saw Janet's pretty, round, blooming cheek and sweet, simple smile, the strange little animal flew away in terror. So there is a taste to be found for everything, and that is wonderful among wonders."

Her weakness was continually increasing, though there was much abatement of the more painful and distressing elements of disease. She had now advanced about six months in her eighty-third year, which was to be her last

(she only lived three or four days in her eighty-fourth), and for the first time she intimates, in a letter of the 23d September, a suspicion which had crossed her of some mental change:

"I always observed the lonely life brings on a dreamy, confused intellect, and my more than half-death last April has left a blank in my memory that causes me a little jealousy on the subject; but no one allows that they perceive anything of the kind yet."

Her letters by no means justify her suspicion. The almost fleshless condition to which she was reduced made her bed very uneasy to her, and she had said, some time before, that it seemed "like a wood-pigeon's nest, which was made of crossed sticks, and in which no creature could find rest except the wood-pigeon." But Mrs. Cameron had sent her one of a better fabric, and on hearing that this watchful and helpful friend, personally unknown to her, had recovered from an illness, she desires to be remembered to her, and says, "I often think of her in my nest, and begin to find a moss lining cover the sticks."

But at this time her rest was broken by a trouble which no friendly care could alleviate. Mrs. Britton, her only remaining sister, eighty-six years of age, seemed to be sinking under a severe illness.

"If I live till she departs I shall be the sad survivor of our large family, and, with one exception, the last of all that I knew in my youth and middle age—a situation that cannot be imagined." (No reference to past feelings and events that occupied us in those days, and that are continually recurring to my mind.) "And the last of the ten Salvins, in his eightieth year, departed above a week ago, I hear. They and your family were those most dear to me in the world. If the love I gave and received in these families were divided over our queen's dominions in equal

portions, her people would have too much for any who is not to live for this life only."

Of the letters which are extant belonging to my correspondence with my mother in 1852, the last (19th November) relates to the funeral of the Duke of Wellington:

"Nothing is heard of in London now but the duke's funeral. The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's assigned me a place in the cathedral in my character of poet; but I did not occupy it. I am too old to court either sadness or emotion; and other causes also made me shrink from this spectacle. Death is too great a thing in itself to be made the occasion of a show; and the greater the man the less I feel disposed to turn his burial into a pageant. But though these were my feelings, I believe the spectacle may have done good. I hear that the demeanor of the spectators was such as to make it appear that they had feelings worthy of the occasion; and glory and renown must always enter so much into military motives that the army and navy may be the better for the splendor of these obsequies."

Humbler obsequies were at hand. On the 19th March, 1853, I was summoned to Witton by Mrs. Darley, who was with my mother, and believed her to be dying. I could scarcely believe it myself when I saw her.

Another relative had arrived on a sudden impulse of kindness, and in ignorance that I was expected. My mother was concerned that she had given herself the trouble, and said, "Well, it will just be—

> "'Who saw her die?
> I, said the fly,
> With my little eye.'"

I wrote to Mrs. Edward Villiers, 22d March, 1853: "I find her, though thinking her end very near, strong in

spirits and clear and lively in mind, and talking of the probabilities of dying at once or lasting into the summer, just as she might talk of any person in whom she took no particular interest, and laughing at the doctors for the care they take not to alarm her. She will complete her eighty-third year next Sunday. The niece who is staying here was a girl of ten or twelve when I knew her before, I being then a youth of twenty-two; and a very charming child I thought her then, and a very charming child I think her still—clear, swift, and decisive, diffident, but independent, gay, and refined. She and my mother are very good company to each other, both having always had a great enjoyment of drollery, which is in full force in May Darley and by no means extinct in my mother, so that I do not find everything so dreary and dreadful as it would be supposed to be by any one who knew only the character of the place and circumstances. *They* are dreary enough. Most people would suppose that in these days and in England a 'lonely tower' was only to be found in Byronian fictions; but here it is in its real presence. For miles round there is no gentleman's house, at least none tenanted, except that of the parson, who never comes near my mother. For as many miles round there is no apothecary except a little old Frenchman, who was formerly mathematical teacher to a grammar school now extinct, and set up doctoring under considerable doubts as to whether he had ever been educated for it, and under a certainty that he has no lawful title to practice. The nearest place where there are any shops (unless you give the name to a cottage with an apple, a piece of gingerbread, and a red herring in the window) is a small market-town five miles off; and meat is only to be obtained once a week. The walls of the tower are four feet thick, and down the middle of it there is a body of air which has

never seen the sun since it was first imprisoned. The furniture is all fifty years old and upwards. . . . She is nursed by a strange, wild, rough maid, speaking a language which would not be understood out of Durham and Northumberland, idle, obstinate, and ill-tempered, but honest and attached, threatening to leave her once a week, but sure to stick by her to the last. Such are the external circumstances, and the disease is of a nature to cause a great deal of disturbance and distress from time to time, and sleep rather aggravates than relieves the distress for some time after; but still the spirit is unbroken and the mind clear and lively; and though she wishes to die, and would be glad that it could be by a sudden stroke, yet all is not so unrelieved and depressing as might be imagined. It is not like watching a death which one is anxious to avert. I have long wished nothing for her but what she wishes for herself, an easy transition.

"She suffered, as often before since her spasmodic illness, from what she described as a sort of dragging sensation in her chest. And, having been lately a good deal harassed by Bell, her maid (described above), who was always misbehaving and always repenting with tears, she said her 'great torments were Bell and the draggin.'"

The end of all came on the 13th April—sleep passing into death so quietly that those who were in the room were not aware of it.

"So ends," I say in my letter to Alice of that day, "of all the lives that I have known the most strongly and steadily dutiful. . . . I look back through three-and-thirty years, and feel how much remained while she remained; and yet for the last two years and a half I have had no desire that her poor solitary life should be lengthened out; and it will be a relief to me, I dare say, to have no longer to think that she is sitting here in her solitude awaiting death."

To Miss Fenwick I wrote:

"The earth covers her now, and a truer and tenderer heart it never did cover; and in an hour I shall leave this place, and probably never to see it again. Oh for the time when I could turn my thoughts to you for comfort, and not think of you as afflicted and depressed. But sooner or later, and in one way or another, God will grant us a happy issue out of all our afflictions."

For Miss Fenwick the issue was not far off. The approach to it was checkered; but the clouds thickened more and more as each year succeeded of the three that remained to her. My mother's remark that "while she could be wretched without being low-spirited, Miss Fenwick could be low-spirited without being wretched," was especially true of this last year of Miss Fenwick's life. Even in other years her nature, with all its moral strength and spiritual elevation, was overrun by emotion; and her religious reliance, though wholly undisturbed by difficulties or doubts, was impassioned rather than serene. It was something I knew about her which prompted four words spoken by Iolande in the third act of "St. Clement's Eve." The Duke of Orleans, who had not yet disclosed to Iolande who he was, is about to ask her aid for his brother, whose madness was to be cured by a miracle which no one but a sinless virgin could perform. He begins by describing his brother's condition:

> "Sorely his soul
> Is wrung and tortured by the terrible power
> Of evil spirits, ever and anon
> Re-entering his body thro' the gaps
> Of faltering faith and intermitted prayer,
> When struggling Nature, wearied with the strife,
> Yields a brief vantage.
>
> IOLANDE. He shall have my prayers;
> 'Twill be my sorrow's solace when you're gone
> To pray for one you love.

ORLEANS. And did you know
In health how kind he is, how good and just,
In anguish how unutterably tried,
You'd pray with tears.
IOLANDE. *I never pray without.*"

She was seriously ill in 1853, but recovered sufficiently to come to us; and, after a visit of some months, she went to live with her niece, at Kelston Knoll, near Bath. In the two following years she suffered grievously at times from physical and nervous prostration. Her inextinguishable love remained; but even that could not lift her out of the deep distress into which she fell at last. And when she died, in December, 1856, I felt about her as I, and I think she also, had felt about Wordsworth five or six years before—that life was a burden from which it was well she should be relieved. I was conscious that all hope of happiness for her in this world was at an end; and I felt that it was time she should receive elsewhere the reward of a life of love and beneficence as nearly divine as any life upon earth I have known or heard of or been capable of conceiving.

Chapter IX.

TROUBLES OF THE NURSERY.—FEAR MORALIZED.—TREASURE-TROVE AT SEATON CAREW.—A MOTHER'S CONSOLATIONS IN LOSING HER YOUTH.—DOMESTIC LIFE.—MEDDLINGS IN PUBLIC MATTERS.

Anno Dom. 1856–57. Anno Æt. 56–57.

While parents and friends of the outgoing generation were passing away, the incoming generation was springing up. My eldest child (at that date between eleven and twelve years of age) was from time to time much shaken in health. Sydney Smith has said that, taking account of the uncertainties of life in children, the life of a parent is like that of a gambler. In many cases and at particular times it is so, and during certain years it was so to me; and of course what was disturbing to the father was not less so to the mother, though she, with whatever agonies of anxiety, had more strength of heart than I, and more of natural elasticity as well as spiritual support.

Miss Fenwick used to regard "living in the spirit of fear" as what was much to be condemned, or at least much to be deprecated. Wordsworth speaks of—

> "Hope the paramount duty that God lays
> For his own glory on man's suffering heart,"

and I have myself spoken somewhere in my essays (and more fully in a letter which I shall quote presently) of fear as a greater evil in life than danger, and one which is more of man's making. But if it be wrong to live in a spirit of fear, and if hope be a duty, I did not find that to be told so made me anything else but what nature had made

me, or time working upon nature—not very innately buoyant, and, as years went on, a good deal depressed by a low state of health; and to admonitions of this tenor I was disposed to answer with "The Solitary" in "The Excursion,"

> "Alas! such wisdom bids a creature fly
> Whose very sorrow is that Time has shorn
> His natural wings."

Looking back now, although I have had many gifts and joys to be thankful for since, I feel that the choice at one time, if to be determined by eligibility on earthly grounds, might well have been to die rather than encounter the troubles and anxieties and griefs of parental life, and this even with physical evil only as the source of the parent's sorrows and fears.

In March, 1856, I wrote to Miss Fenwick:

"At the beginning of the autumn I had begun to think that a family of children were to be a perpetual distress for which no happiness they could give rise to could be a compensation—that in their hands were the dagger and the bowl, and that the stabs of fear and the poison of anxiety made up the portion one was to have in them; but I am less desponding now, and if a little more space and respite be granted, I trust I shall be able to look my children in the face with a healthier feeling. As they grow older we may reasonably expect that their bodies will give us less of solicitudes and cares. How it may be with their minds is another question; and if not well, I suppose it will be in a great measure our fault, and that compunction should be superadded to pain. But these are evil speculations which may as well be postponed for the present; for, as things are, I have reason to be content both with the little bodies and the little minds."

A year or two after I moralized the time in a letter to Mrs. Prescott:

"It has been an uneventful six weeks here and rather too eventful elsewhere; and the lesson one has to learn from it is, that in a world of uncertainties that particular uncertainty which we are taking account of is very likely less deserving of notice than half a dozen or half a hundred others which do not rise up before us, or only rise half up, like Cavalcante (is it not?) from his tomb in the Inferno. If anything could teach us not to be

'over exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils,'

it is seeing how one phantom of evil succeeds another in one's life, and how monstrous a proportion the phantoms bear to the realities, or *would* bear to them if we did not, by our fears, make unreal evils into real. Our joy in the present is quenched a hundred times by fears for once that it is quenched by facts; and Sydney Smith spoke a wise word when he advised us to take 'short views of life.' Best, no doubt, if over the short view we can take a long view in another sense and of a second distance."

The fears and uncertainties of those years were many of them groundless; and those that were not might have been postponed to a later time. Four children remain to me while I write; the most gifted is gone; but of each and all I may say that so far as the evil speculations glanced at twenty years ago had reference to their hearts and minds and moral natures, those speculations have proved utterly and distinctly superfluous. I suppose it would be unbecoming in me to say more.

In the August following some of the little bodies were again a subject of anxiety. I had to seek a solace in the contemplation of my conjugal relations for what was trying in the parental; and I was led to write of the former with a complacency of which I *am* not ashamed, whether I ought to be or not:

"I am alone and of necessity without news, and of equal necessity rather sad and tender in spirits; but I hope the two days' account of to-morrow morning will be twice as good as to-day's would have been could I have received it. . . . I have been reading the life of Goethe, and thinking how he missed the romance of life, and what wretched work he made of it; and then I thought of my own; and though too sad to be presumptuous, I found a consolation in the feeling that I had known better how to keep some of the poetry of life for my latter days, and that on the verge of fifty-six there is as much charm extant for me in *my* Frederika as that shallow-hearted sentimentalist threw away in his. How it might have been with me if our beginnings had been when I was twenty-two instead of thirty-four, I know not; but I *think* not as it was with Goethe."

In what follows there is an allusion to an acquaintance we had made the year before at a small seaside village, called Seaton Carew, on the coast of Durham. People who have had too much of London society in the season betake themselves to remote watering-places for rest and seclusion. It was long since *we* had experienced any exhaustion from gayeties; and, for my part, whether socially satiated or socially starved, the desire to get out of the way of my fellow-creatures has never been strong in me, except in my youth and under some poetic or dramatic seductions. We took the children every summer to some seaside for the benefit of their health; and my way was not to seclude myself, but to observe the groups on the beach, pick out the group which wore an attractive appearance, and creep through the shingle into its acquaintance—using the children, perhaps, as a medium. The beach at Seaton Carew was scantily provided; but there was one group which looked singularly prepossessing—two young ladies of about seven-

teen years of age, one slightly formed, with a lapsing and undulating sort of grace in her movements, the other graceful too, but with movements more swift and abrupt. This was a treasure-trove, and we called them Flotsam and Jetsam, and were not long in making their acquaintance. They were twins, and Jetsam claimed to be the elder born of the pair and always called the other "this child." This child, on the other hand, maintained that the nurse had "mixed" them shortly after their birth, and it was quite uncertain which was born first. It is to this couple that the remainder of the letter alludes: "Then I turned in my mind the remark of Goethe's biographer, that Frederika's charm may have depended on situation, and that the girl who seemed a wood-nymph at Sesenheim may have looked in society at Strasburg like a rustic out of place; and I began to wonder whether the charm of our twins at Seaton Carew depended in some more or less measure on the rocks and sands, and how it would bear transplantation. I think it will, and that much of it at least is more than incidental."

It is many years since Flotsam and Jetsam have crossed my path; but, looking back now and then, I seem to see them, at Seaton Carew, half sitting, half lying, on the beach, as if they had been thrown upon it.

In the summer of 1857 the children were in their better health again; and, writing to Alice on the day after she had entered upon her fortieth year (3d June), I could appeal to them as a consolation and indemnity for the loss of her youth—a consolation I could well feel to be needed; for I myself, in my day, had lamented the departure of youth more than I should imagine to be common with men who are not altogether unmanly; and we all know that a woman's loss of youth is twice the loss suffered by a man.

I had spent her birthday with her and the children at St. Leonard's-on-Sea, and I wrote to her from London on the day following:

"I made my journey comfortably enough, though somewhat sadly; partly, perhaps, from leaving you, but more from the sadness I had left with you; and I was disposed to ask myself why a birthday after eight-and-twenty should be esteemed a festal day for any one. To me, indeed, anniversary days have no particular significance. One day certifieth another of the lapse of time, and one as much as another; and if it were not for other people's ways and feelings I should not, in my own, take any distinction of days; but the custom of making up accounts of time at anniversaries almost forces upon one at such periods a sadder sense of the time that is gone. There are few people to whom the passing away of youth and beauty brings more mournful feelings in my mournful moods than to me; and in such moods the passing away of *your* beauty and youth is infinitely sad. I do not comfort myself at such times by persuading myself that you are as beautiful as ever. I think you are so at times, but I do not find comfort in the thought; because, even if it be not a delusion, the clinging to that belief would be no more than getting up the mast when the ship is sinking. The only real comfort to be found is in clinging to what is less perishable; and who has more than you of what time does not take away? As to youth, in one's very prime one knows that it is preparing to depart; and there is as much sadness, if one is given to sadness, in the possession as in the loss of it; and I never was so sad about it as when I was eight-and-twenty and thereabouts:

'I could not choose
But weep to have what I so feared to lose;'

and when I came to have little to lose, and the loss of that

little was more surely at hand, I was much less troubled in that way. And so it will be with you by and by; and you will find that the attaching, and even the attracting, powers and endowments will not suffer any early decay, and that you will probably have them as long as you want them, and until the interests belonging to them shall have been supplanted by other interests growing from a deeper root. Think of dear Lady Harriet, and of all the powers that, in her instance, seemed to gather strength rather than suffer decline in that decade of her life into which your life is now passing. And think, also, of what you have that she had not, to come in their place should they fail. For if the bearing of children, and the cares and anxieties they give rise to, do something to shorten the mother's youth, still may it be said that 'the dew of their birth is of the womb of the morning;' for what greater difference is there between youth and age than the difference between a woman with children and a woman without? And the freshness which is brought over a woman's life by children is one which she may reasonably hope will last till the end of it; and even when her children are no longer children it is often renewed to her, like a dew of the *evening*, by her children's children. So think of the tears that fell in those five years of your first youth when you were mourning its barrenness, and would gladly have given all its brightness and freshness and charm and beauty in exchange for a child; and, as I well recollect your telling me, you would have accounted it a taking away of your curse even if one single sickly child had been born to you, that,

> 'being born, did lie
> In his sad nurse's arms an hour or two and die.'

Think of those past times and feelings, and do not think that you have fallen upon evil days now—now, when you

have the so-longed-for children and a husband whose love has been deepened by all the changes and chances of the days that have come and gone since then."

What my official labors amounted to in these years I know not. Not much, I should think, for, in 1856, I seem to have taken a part, which it did not necessarily belong to me to take, in a dispute between our government and that of the United States:

"I did not put myself forward in that Central American question, as I seldom do upon any public question which is in the hands of others; but I have felt for some months that it had become very voluminous and complicated, and was likely to get beyond the competency of any man who had not a great deal of quiet time to give to it; and I *have* given a great deal of time to it, in view of the possibility that I might be called upon sooner or later to act in it; and I had not been two days in London before the call came."

I have forgotten all about the question now; but it appears that, after some conferences with Lord Clarendon, then foreign secretary, and Mr. Labouchere, colonial secretary, I considered that I had "succeeded in giving the negotiations a turn which, as far as I could judge, would materially affect our future relations with the United States."

In 1855 the inquiries conducted by Sir Charles Trevelyan and Sir Stafford Northcote into the manner in which appointments were made to the civil service, and their report in favor of competitive examination, led me to write a letter to Lord Granville, suggesting that, while nomination should be combined with competition, there should be a competition between patrons as well as between candidates. I wrote on the subject to the public men I knew who were most likely to take an interest in it. The de-

gree of interest which *was* taken is indicated in a letter I wrote to Sir Arthur Helps, thanking him for a work he had sent me, in which he had treated of civil organization:

"As individuals become less pre-eminent organization becomes more important, because things are done by plural operation. Twice within the last few years I have conceived that I had conceived a conception which might strike root downwards and bear fruit upwards. On each occasion I wrote to the minister charged with the department, and explained and advocated my project. On one of the two occasions I wrote to half a dozen ministers and ex-ministers. With all these gentlemen I was more or less personally acquainted, and most of them seemed to regard my projects as worthy of consideration—and there was an end of them. The projects lie at the bottom of one of my green boxes. I said to myself, by what organization, in these days, can things worthy to be considered get themselves considered to some practical purpose? I had some glimmering of the answer, but I knew myself to be destitute of the organizing faculties and energies which are indispensable to the work. There are two attributes of statesmen which are to be borne in mind. Brutus says of Cicero:

'He'll never follow anything
Which other men begin.'

This points to one of the difficulties which a mere projector has to encounter. Most statesmen are Ciceronian in this respect, and the instinct of incubation is to hatch their own eggs, and not those of another. If this is one instinct that we have to look to, another is self-preservation. A statesman will sit upon another man's eggs if he foresees the alternative of being put in the pillory and pelted with them. If I had had £10,000 to spare, and

could have commanded the services of men having the faculties and energies which I have not, I should have said to such men, 'Take my projects, write about them in twenty newspapers, send out circulars, assemble meetings, give dinners,* canvass members of Parliament, get motions made, and, if the projects are intrinsically good, see whether the minister will not consider them, instead of considering them worthy of consideration.' In this country nothing seems so useless and nugatory as what is called 'throwing out a suggestion.' Excellent suggestions are flying and fluttering about in all directions, like so many moths and butterflies, and boys throw their hats at them; but if they are only intended for the welfare of mankind they might as well never be born. Can any organization be devised by which they may be turned to account? I fear not; because nothing except the material interests of classes seems capable of producing unity of opinion and harmony in co-operation."

* I recollect one of our political under secretaries showing me, with a smile, the concluding words of a letter from a man in the City, soliciting his support of a projected bill: "There will be a dinner upon the preamble."

Chapter X.

SOCIAL LIFE.—AT THE GRANGE.—BISHOP WILBERFORCE AND OTHERS.—LIGHT AND SHADE.—A SPECTRE COMES TO A DINNER.

Anno Dom. 1856–57. Anno Æt. 56–57.

Social life makes some part of every man's life. It has made a small part of mine; not from any want of disposition to make it larger, but from circumstances and weakness of health.

Stephen Spring Rice said of me that I liked *any* woman better than *any* man; and at one time of my life this, though, of course, an exaggeration, did indicate a truth. Twelve years ago I put into verse a signal example—most people will think it not more signal than shameful—of the truth so indicated. In April, 1864, I met, for the first and only time, on a visit to Alfred Tennyson at Farringford, a man * whose renown, in a different kind, was not less rightfully his due than Alfred's own. And it appears from the poem that I was more occupied with the charms of a beautiful girl who was there than with either of the two great men:

"Something betwixt a pasture and a park,
Saved from sea-breezes by a hump of down,
Tossed blue-bells in the face of April, dark
With fitful frown.

"And there was he, that gentle hero, who,
By virtue and the strength of his right arm

* Garibaldi.

Dethroned an unjust king, and then withdrew
To tend his farm.

"To whom came forth a mighty man of song,
Whose deep-mouth'd music rolls thro' all the land,
Voices of many rivers, rich or strong,
Or sweet or grand.

"I turned from bard and patriot, like some churl,
Senseless to powers that hold the world in fee—
How is it that the face of one fair girl
Is more to me?"

Alice has always been equally with myself subject to captivation by girls and women; but in some cases she regarded my predilections as unfastidious. In a letter to Mrs. E. Villiers, written when her twin daughters were staying with us at East Sheen (5th October, 1860), I had something to say about fastidiousness:

"It was a maxim of Miss Fenwick's that a fastidious taste is not a good taste. In truth, whatever there may be supposed to be of refinement in it, it is a poor and meagre taste. To be able to make small account of small or superficial blemishes and of defects of manner not arising out of evil dispositions, and to like or admire—not blindly, of course, but largely and genially—whatever humanity presents of what is likable or admirable, is the gift of a *good* taste, being also the gift of a kindly and liberal spirit; and Edward had no fastidiousness that would have interfered for a moment with this; and, indeed, he had a special repugnance to all illiberal fastidiousness, and cordially despised it. I see a great deal of it in young ladies whom I meet with here and there, but nothing of it in the twins. On the contrary, I observe that if they have nothing kind to say of any one, they say nothing. And they have a good notion of social duties, and that best (as being the most benevolent) good-breeding which, without re-

gard to personal preferences, deals to all in general society an equal, or at least a fair, measure of social attentions. Elsewhere than in general society there is fair play for personal preferences; and it would be very stupid and uninteresting of them were they to show none. For the rest, they are gentle, tender, and affectionate, and in matters of outward manner and demeanor they have all their father's felicity and grace, which is about as much as human nature is capable of."

Miss Fenwick's teaching was not, I think, lost upon me. In my commerce with society during my middle and elderly age, if not before, I was observant, and my letters abound in personal descriptions; but I think I may say they contain little or no alloy of fastidiousness. I most liked to describe persons in whom I had found something to admire, or, if not that, something distinctively individual which was not disagreeable.

The absence of fastidiousness made me harmless in society, but there was nothing that I know of to make me agreeable. My mind had nothing of the "touch-and-go" movement which can alone enable a man to take a pleasant part in light and general conversation. As to wit, I can invent it in my study and make it spirt from the mouth of a *dramatis persona;* but elsewhere I have no power of producing it with any but an infelicitous effect. Alice once observed, not without reason, that my jokes required to be carefully considered by some competent person in order to be understood. Before my marriage it was seldom that I saw more of society than the glittering surface to be seen in London. I cannot recollect that while single I ever paid visits to more than three or four country-houses, two of which were in the same connection—Ravensworth Castle, the seat of Lord Ravensworth and Becket, the seat of Lord Barrington, who had married his daughter. Of

the former I recollect little except the face of the youngest daughter of the house, now Lady Bloomfield, in the brightness of its dawn; of the latter, little except the voices in song of her two sisters, Lady Williamson and Lady Barrington, of whom I wrote at the time, that there had been no such singing since "the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

After my marriage the only country-house we frequented where much of society was to be seen was "The Grange," in Hampshire, the seat of Lord and Lady Ashburton. My wife could not make up her mind to go anywhere without her children, and we were welcome to the Ashburtons with all our encumbrances. Two or three of my letters from the Grange will suffice to represent the social life to be seen there.

At the end of 1853 the party included a number of public men, or men who were shortly to become public men, with the wives of those who had any—Robert Lowe and his wife, Lord Carnarvon (in his first youth), Lord and Lady Canning, Frank and Lady Anne Charteris, now (1876) Lord and Lady Elcho, and Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford. Of the last I wrote in a letter to Miss Fenwick:

"The bishop seems to be compounded of many simples —full of fire and impulse, yet perfect in social tact; full of drollery, but governed by a competent measure of discretion; bright, sharp, and subtile, ready and graceful and full of resource in conversation; with a cordiality of manner which is very true to his nature, I dare say, though it might lead to a mistake if it were understood as expressing more than mere *sociable* cordiality. I can easily suppose, however, that there are depths in his nature, and that there may be some genuine and powerful feelings and affections dwelling in them."

In 1855 we met some of the same people again, and many more; and I gave an account of them in a letter to Aubrey de Vere, begun at East Sheen in December, 1854, but shortly broken off, and resumed at the Grange in January, 1855. It needs a few prefatory words. When we were at Naples, in 1843–44, we had escaped as fast as possible from an expensive hotel to apartments kept by an Englishman whose showy appearance and manners were oddly at variance with indications of penury in his household; a young wife, for sufficient reasons afraid to be seen, and a beggarly old Italian woman for a servant, whom he scolded in language which he was not aware that we overheard. The letter begins with a little looking back upon Naples before it gets to the Grange:

"East Sheen, December, 1854.

"Was it not about this time ten years ago that we were leaving our accidental splendors at the Vittoria, and you were ranging up and down the Chiaja to find us an apartment, till you hit upon that singular couple, Mr. and Mrs. ——, and the 'Gran Bestaccia' who waited upon them? Oh, what changes since then! I almost wish I could see once more the good-looking, flashy adventurer, with his smart clothes and curled mustaches, entreating our poor little Sarah to use the hearth-brush equally on both sides, for fear it should be worn out more on one than the other, and his rather elegant, half-starved wife, who lay in bed for want of clothes to put on—and of whom I once or twice caught a glimpse venturing to creep about a little in her night-shift—and even the 'Gran Bestaccia' herself, the dirt upon whose skin and rags seemed as old as the skin and rags themselves. If they would all three walk into this room at this moment, I should be glad to see them, and I would ask them to sit down, Mr. and Mrs.

—— on the sofa, and the 'Gran Bestaccia' in the coal-scuttle, which she would naturally prefer. Oh, world! oh, life! oh, time!"

"Scene changes to the Grange in January, 1855:

"And I wish you had been there too; for there were some people almost as well worth seeing as Mr. and Mrs. ——, and the Bestaccia. Of the scientific and literary, there were Dr. Lyon Playfair, easy, ready, and full, fluent in facts and wonders, with simple, cheerful, honest manners and looks; Dr. Carpenter, grave and refined-looking, intellectual and self-possessed; on his first arrival he had been so much alarmed at finding himself among a score of strangers that he had purposed to fly before their faces the next morning; but he soon found he was liked, and took heart of grace to stay three or four days; Professor Vaughan, very agreeable and gentlemanly; Dr. Linley, a quiet, complacent, sociable, benevolent, intelligent, loquacious, Scotch-looking, Scotch-mannered old botanist—whether really Scotch or not I don't know; he had no accent; Mr. Thompson, an Oxford tutor, simple, solid, good, capable, and pleasing; Mr. Jowett, another, nervous and still—deeply learned, they say—a silent reservoir with a gleam; Tom Taylor, clever, vigorous, rough, and smooth; Venables, grave, melancholy, simple, true, easy in discourse, rich in knowledge never displayed though always at hand; feelings left to be guessed at, but I should think deep and delicate; very much the master of himself and of his very considerable faculties and gifts. These were the men of science and letters. Then comes a good-humored-looking Captain and Mrs. Baring; an Alick Baring; a Mr. Beach; a Lord Giffard—pleasant but sanguinary, for he had killed sixty-five tigers, eleven elephants, and a multitude of bears; a Mr. Gowan, fulfilled of all knowledge, as it is said—whose walk into the room was as if he

had the knowledge in a bowl between both hands and was afraid of spilling it; or like the walk of a man who knows that he is always on the edge of a precipice; or like the walk of a monthly nurse in a darkened room, who knows not what she may knock against next—only he seemed to be himself the object of his own nursing; he said nothing (except a few words once a day to make silence audible and to assure us that he was not the *ghost* of a nurse), and he expected nothing and was in nobody's way; and at the end of his visit his servant wrapped him carefully up and put him into a fly to be taken away. He probably left no impression on many of us; but on me he left rather a peculiar impression—of a noiseless and passionless existence; a human being who gave nothing, asked nothing, said nothing, did nothing, felt nothing, and was perfectly contented with himself and everybody else; how cautiously he sat down! 'weighing his spread vans,' while the nether part gradually lowered itself to within flumping distance and then flumped; Lord de Mauley, cultivated, refined and distinguished-looking—and he might have been agreeable, but his favorite son is in the Crimea, and he looked as if the waters of the Black Sea had gone over his soul. Next are the politicians, but they are not many: Lord Grey, Edward Ellice, and Mr. Lowe. Lord Grey, vehement, strong, honest, open, clear of head and clear of purpose—the man of all others who is wanted at this moment for war minister, the making of whom so unpopular as to be unavailable is one of the deepest injuries which the press has inflicted on the public service; Edward Ellice, shrewd, kind, copious of speech, with a genuine *bonhommie* and a rough courtesy; Mr. Lowe, a little supercilious, but like a gentleman in his looks and ways, and nothing against him that I know of except his connection with the press and his large share in the aforesaid injury

to the public service by anonymous vilifying of Lord Grey —(of course the one went away before the other came). Next are the men about town (God forgive them for being about nothing better, and God forgive many of us for being about something worse!)—Lord Elcho, Fleming, Mr. Hibbert, and Mr. Henry Corry: Elcho, clever, light, graceful, gay—with ease and pleasure in every tone of his voice and every movement of his body; a man of pleasure whom it is a pleasure to see; but how will he grow old? is a question which one cannot help asking one's self at my time of life; Fleming, a purling brook; Hibbert, an ugly, homely, kindly, comfortable old bachelor, who cultivates the art of dining-out and has the necessary knowledge; Henry Corry, a rather crazy, rather pleasant, wild young fellow of fifty—writing *vers de société* and reading them to the ladies half the day; with a vein of Irish drollery and two veins of Irish impudence—gentlemanly enough to afford to do things which a man with less advantages of manner would not be able to carry off; —— ——, a withered beau with a young manner and an old face; frivolous, but gentlemanly. Next are the artists, and they were but three: Westmacott, the sculptor, who is more like a man of the world than like an artist; Doyle, the caricaturist—a gentle, modest, ugly, interesting person; and Wesley, the doctor of music; but there was no 'music breathing from his face.' Two men remain unclassified: an American—very gentlemanly and looking like any foreigner you please *except* an American; and Brookfield, whom you know—a man of many moods, and yet perhaps the most invariably agreeable of us all, and certainly the most felicitous in adapting himself to every occasion and every man, woman, and child, from the old card-playing dowager to the baby in arms and the nurse and the nursery-maid.

"These and such were the men. And now to the women — no, not to the women, or not now; I have made far too long a muster-roll already, and if I were to go to the women, and

> 'If I should tell the politic arts
> To take and keep men's hearts'—

You know what follows:

> 'And all the little lime-twigs laid
> By Machiavel the waiting-maid,
> I more voluminous should grow
> (Chiefly if I, like them, should tell
> All change of weathers that befell)
> Than Holinshed and Stowe.'

There were, in all truth of prose, some changes of weather among the women; but, on the whole, though beauty and goodness and happiness are not in the habit of 'kissing each other,' like peace and righteousness, there was as much of those and as much of kissing as do commonly come together. And now we are at home again and the children are all well, and we have agreeable recollections and agreeable anticipations and present peace."

In a former volume I took a distinction between the society of Holland House and that of Lansdowne House, in favor of the former in respect of the divers kinds of masculine material, of the latter in respect of a due intermixture of feminine. These large parties at the Grange included all kinds of both sexes. When there were many at a time, people fell into assorted groups by natural selection, and whether there were many or few at a time—as most of the visitors stayed only three or four days while we stayed as many weeks—we saw one lot after another come upon the stage, play their parts, and pass off; and there was unceasing variety, whether by subdivision into groups, or by ebb and flow and succession.

The literary element was, I think, a little younger than that of Holland House. It was certainly livelier than that of Lansdowne House, partly perhaps by difference of place and partly by difference of persons. Lord Holland had not quite left the eighteenth century behind him. He preferred Dryden to Shakespeare and Crabbe to Wordsworth. It is difficult to conceive that, even in the eighteenth century, such estimates could have been common — though Wordsworth used to designate that century as "the dark age"—but they did not seem to excite surprise at Holland House. Crabbe, I think, had been personally known there; but I doubt whether, in that society, personal association went for much in the estimate of values. On Crabbe's death, Lord Melbourne rubbed his hands and took a view of it which was more than consolatory: "I am so glad when one of these fellows dies, because then one has his works complete on one's shelf and there is an end of him."

Another of my letters, *glancing* at the Grange, but nothing more, was addressed to a girl who was then just emerging from childhood—Arabella, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Prescott, to whose house in Rutland Gate Stephen Spring Rice had been taken when he broke a blood-vessel in Hyde Park at the Great Exhibition in 1851. The Prescotts had become great friends of himself and his family; and through them the friendship had penetrated to us. Arabella is now Mrs. Prescott Decie, living in a house far away in the country, which she seldom leaves, and it is not often that I see her. But she is not a person whom, having once loved, one can ever cease to love.

"At the Grange," I wrote, "there was a cloud of *savans*, physiologists, chemists, mechanists, historians, poets, artists, Doctor this and Professor that; but Carlyle flashed through the cloud, and the Brookfields glistened

and gleamed through it; and there was a beautiful Anglo-Greek, who had condescended to marry the name of Zoë to the name of Thompson, borne by the provost of Queen's College, Oxford;* and she lighted up the black-coats more or less, though she was not as vivacious as a Greek should be, but rather, in a graceful way, quiet and retiring. Of one kind or another, however, there was a great deal that was agreeable and interesting in the party; and had there been three more elements in it—youth, folly, and music—there would have been nothing wanting to its charm."

There is one rather unhappy effect of a life led in society, if the society be bright and gay—that it casts a shadow over private life; especially when, as in the case of Lady Ashburton, there are no children to light it up. I thought that at the Grange, when by some accident there was no one there but ourselves,

> "She had not that alacrity of spirit
> And cheer of mind"

that she was wont to have when we had been alone with her at Alverstoke or Addiscomb Farm; and that she was rather subdued by the effect of shade than rested or refreshed by it—as kind as ever, but with a difference.

I wrote to Mrs. Brookfield in March, 1856: "I am not sure that I can say *I* like the Grange best when there is no one there. If I felt that *she* liked it best I think I should. But that is what I don't feel in these latter days. She is by nature reserved; and I rather think that a life of society is apt to become a life of reserve. And then one is more conscious of reserve when society is removed; and in privacy unreserve must be a more real and serious thing—very different from the gay appearances of it

* Now (1875) Archbishop of York.

which break out in a conversational *mêlée*. However, I am always happy enough at the Grange, be it full or be it empty; and, perhaps, in the matter of unreserve, as of other things, I get as much as I give. For I am not sure that I have not myself become more reserved of late years. I suppose we all do as we become older and wickeder."

With Lady Ashburton's death my social life may be said to have come to an end. On looking back to it I think all that was worth having in it came to me through her. I made no new friendships at the Grange; but I valued, as well I might, the unbroken weeks of intercourse afforded to me there with friends whom I could only see elsewhere by fits and starts—Carlyle, George Venables, and the Brookfields. They were friends of the Ashburtons in the first degree; and, like ourselves, they were in the habit of paying long visits at the Grange, and we saw them there in a very different way from that in which friends can see each other in London. At London dinners and assemblies one may make acquaintances—as one may in a railway carriage—and the acquaintances made in either may chance to result in a friendship; but the friendship must be made and maintained elsewhere.

For two or three years I used to frequent large assemblies at the Admiralty and at Lansdowne House. Why, I am at a loss to imagine, for society can hardly be cultivated in any form less pleasant or less profitable. "Discourse of Reason," in any consecutive conversation, can hardly find a place in them. One girl I knew, Miss Hope Richardson—and I spoke of her in a letter as the only girl I knew—who could be engaged in conversation on subjects other than frivolous at a large assembly, and really think of what she was saying. Her eyes did not wander like the eyes of others, and she might have been

sitting anywhere else than in a large assembly—in a cave on a mountain-side, or

"on the secret top
Of Oreb or of Sinai."

And there was another girl—much admired for her beauty—whom I did not know (Erskine, I think, was her name), but whom I used to see and watch in those assemblies, whose mind, whether rich or poor, seemed to be discoursing with some other region. Unlike Miss Richardson, she scarcely spoke to any one; but to me she presented a still more singular aspect, for she almost always looked as if she was alone. These were interesting anomalies, and *so* anomalous that they brought into relief the inane idleness of such assemblies, in their general aspect. The Duke of Wellington was often to be seen in them, and I thought he must use them to *vacate* his mind; only, as it is known that he had the gift of sleeping at will, it was a puzzling question why he did not prefer his bed. So much for large assemblies.

At a large *dinner*, however, there is no doubt more opportunity than at a large assembly for intercourse other than volatile and artificial, and I hope I had no grudge or spite against London dinners, derived from my own indifferent qualifications for playing a part at them. I could find pleasure in them though I could give none, and they are good things enough in their way. But I have felt, from time to time and at one or another of them, that natural sentiments can be strangely ignored. Some phantom of the past rises and takes its seat at the table, like Banquo's ghost; perhaps "with twenty trenched gashes on its head;" only one person sees it or owns to seeing it, or, if seeing it, cares to look twice; and presently it vanishes amid the chatter and clatter round about it and is seen no more. Once and again I have gone home

from a gay London dinner-party, thinking that the past was another world as much as the future, and not less dimly descried, and yet that the present was the least substantial of the three. I wrote to Alice on one occasion: "I dined at —— ——'s and there I met Mrs. ——, *ci-devant* —— ——, whom I think I have never seen but once since I saw her for the purpose of promoting her marriage with the man she *ought* to have married. Nothing seems to make London society more light and empty and unreal than these light social meetings with persons whom one has last known in critical conjunctures of their youthful life—no more remembered now, or at least not *otherwise* remembered, than the incidents of an old novel read twenty years ago."

So much for our social life ending in 1857. We resumed it for a few winter months in each of three years (1873–4–5), when our children had grown up, in order that they might have a taste of it; and we all, old and young, found it pleasant. And there need not be any harm in it, taken and enjoyed in no more than due measure, and so that it does not supplant other and less factitious enjoyments, or the love of what, if not pleasanter, is better worth. With whom how much of social amusement will do this, may often be a difficult question to answer.

With children the answer should not present many difficulties; and I think it is only in the last ten or twenty years that I have heard of children, twelve, ten, eight years of age, criticising the entertainments given to them, in language which used to seem natural only in worn-out men and women of the world, calling this dance tolerable and that other a bore.

Under such social customs as can convert children into social critics, where shall we find

"delight in little things,
The buoyant child surviving in the man."

There is no such survival even in the child. And can all the world, with all its wealth of pleasures, afford an equivalent?

When I was in Italy I remember being told (the story, I believe, is an old one) of a child belonging to a royal house in that country, upon whom all sorts of costly and magnificent toys were showered by courtiers and friends. He would have nothing to say to them. The thing he took delight in was making mud pies.

In later life it is but few of us, unfortunately, that can take delight in little things—or in mud pies; but there are great things also which may lose their charm through too much indulgence in social excitements; and when we surrender ourselves wholly to such excitements, we hardly know, perhaps, what and how much we renounce; not domestic life only, or only tranquillity and peace and the spiritual affections that blossom in peace; but also what Literature can give us when she is sought, not in her highways, but in her sanctuary; and still more distinctly and absolutely the sense of beauty in the face of nature. I have been far less open to captivation by the beauty of Nature (except in some sorts and in her sylvan recesses) than other persons of my time, having the same or the like poetical susceptibilities; but even I can feel the value of a devotion to natural beauty, and admire the admiration I so partially and imperfectly partake. This much I should have caught from my father, though Wordsworth had never existed; and I remember and can still repeat the majestic stanza of Beattie's, in which I think, more than in any other poetry, he found a not inadequate expression of the sort of reverence for the beauty of Nature which possessed him:

"Oh! how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields,
The warbling woodlands, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's shadowy bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven—
Oh! how canst thou renounce and hope to be forgiven."

Men do renounce them when they devote their days and nights to society, and I suppose they hope to be forgiven, if it ever occurs to them that there is anything to forgive. To me, if health, strength, and opportunity had not been wanting, society might have been more of a temptation than it was; for occasionally, and when I was equal to it, I liked it.

Chapter XI.

MR. AND LADY MARY LABOUCHERE.—STATE OF HEALTH.—VISIT TO MR. AND MRS. PRESCOTT.—LIFE IN A LODGING.—AN ILLNESS.—AN OFFICIAL ARRANGEMENT.—A NEW FRIENDSHIP.

Anno Dom. 1855–59. Anno Æt. 55–59.

Downing Street seems an odd sort of *locus in quo* for a nursery of friendships. "The shepherd in Virgil became at last acquainted with love, and found him a native of the rocks." It may be so; but almost all my friendships have issued, directly or indirectly, out of Downing Street.

In November, 1855, Mr. Labouchere (afterwards Lord Taunton) succeeded Sir W. Molesworth, who a few months before had succeeded Lord Russell, in the office of secretary of state for the colonies. In a letter of the 23d of that month Lord Russell writes: "Labouchere, your new master, is one of the purest and most virtuous of our political men"—a truth which was recognized with a rare unanimity by all parties in the political world, and with a heartfelt appreciation by those who knew him in private life.

I had known his wife before her marriage, when she was Lady Mary Howard, but had seen little more of her in those days than her looks; thinking, however, then, that "all the blood of all the Howards" could not in this matter of looks be more fitly represented. In later years, when I knew her intimately, I knew that the outward as-

pect was no more than a faithful expression of the inner life. We became great friends.

I avail myself of my letters to her to give some account, along with other things, of a change in my health and of the consequent changes in my manner of life.

I had been gradually gaining strength since the time of my travels in search of it, but, in the year 1857, after an attack of influenza, a cough fixed itself upon me which lasted long enough to be the motive of a visit to Torquay, and to my friends the Prescotts, who were staying there. It was probably premonitory of the bronchitic asthma which was shortly to follow, but it appears that I did not look upon it in that light.

"TORQUAY, 14*th April*.—I came here last Tuesday, to see if I could get rid of a cough which I have had since February, and which annoys Alice, though I cannot say that it does *me* any harm, and the doctor here has a good opinion of it. I shall take it back to Sheen on Thursday, quite satisfied that it is a good and wholesome cough, though led to believe that in the case of coughs, as of women, mildness and obstinacy go together. If my change of air has not done much for me, I have at least had a very pleasant change in other respects, being on a visit here to the Prescotts, with whom I spent some two or three months of last summer, while Alice was at Tunbridge Wells; people abounding in kindness of all sorts, and hospitable beyond all human hospitality of modern times. They have had with them, since January, the whole of the family of Stephen Spring Rice—his wife and 'the tuneful nine' his children, and their governess and servants—in all, seventeen souls; and the house is as 'cheerful as a grove in spring,' and music goes on from morning till night—pianoforte, harp, violin, violoncello, and voices of all kinds, and, I may also say, of all ages;

for yesterday I heard a song very beautifully sung by a lady seventy-seven years old. The music all day long, and not the performing only, but even the practising, suits me —better than it would you, I dare say—for I have an ignorant fondness for music which is by no means fastidious. And then there is a great deal of girl-life going on, which is always full of interest for me; and there is one very fine creature of the girl-kind—ingenuous, noble, and free —who, though not of the house, is always in and about it, playing croquet on the lawn by day or making music in the evenings, and concerning whom—a girl I had never seen till last week—I was seriously consulted by a man of whom I know almost as little.* And when I see the sort of holiday-life that is led at such a place as this, I hardly wonder that so many a man (like Jacob) finds a wife at a watering-place."

In 1858 it was my boy's health, and not my own, which was a subject of anxiety. On his account it became necessary that Alice and the children should live by the seaside for many months, and I had to betake myself to a lodging in London, whence I wrote to Lady Mary (1st October): "It seems like returning to the life of twenty years ago—the rather dingy, but very comfortable, sitting-room and bedroom that open into each other, and the more than dingy but very serviceable lodging-house slut, who does everything one wants so much better than half a dozen gentleman's servants; communicative, too, so that one is led to mention one's feelings and get many little matters attended to which might otherwise have been nipped in the bud. It used to be a pleasant life in the

* He asked me whether I thought he had any chance, and I said, "None." I was wrong. They were married soon after. It has been said by a recent novelist, with some approximation to truth, that no man can understand how any other man can win a woman's love.

days in which the sense of solitude was in itself a sort of inspiration, and the society of phantoms was more animating and delightful than flesh and blood; but 'chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy.' is a very different thing at fifty-eight from what it is at eight-and-twenty, and I am afraid I shall miss Alice and the children without finding my insubstantial friends of twenty and thirty years ago. However, if all goes well at St. Leonard's I shall be quite happy enough."

Then comes a description of some acquaintances we had made, in the persons of two charming young Hungarians, a Madame de Karowlij and her brother, a Monsieur de Kornis, who, by the time we had become intimate with them, were about to depart.

"Do you think it is well to make this sort of light, fugacious friendships? They are very pleasant, and have no cares or duties charged upon them; and they never reach the stage where 'love the gift is love the debt;' and it is so pleasant to give and so irksome to pay, is it not?"

Early in 1859 came the illness which I have supposed to have been foreshadowed by the cough of 1857. It lasted in full force till nearly the end of the year, and what it was like is shown in a letter to Mrs. Edward Villiers, of the 19th December, when its force had been spent: "And now I can tell you of three weeks more of perfect peace; not a trace of asthma left; no spasm, scarce a wheeze even. And the bronchitis is now as mild as it can be to bear that name, and any tightness or irritation is sure to yield to one or two cigarettes, whether by night or by day. From what I can learn, mine is a rare and remarkable case of cure. It was, they say, a case of singular severity in the disease; and certainly after eight months of such severities coming and going, and never wholly intermitted but for a few days in April, and in the last months

much aggravated, nothing could seem more strange than that, with the use of a few cigarettes, it should all go off in smoke! Whiff, whiff, and it was gone! Now that I can look back upon it as a part of the past, it seems rather a dreadful malady; more so than it seemed when it was upon me; except, indeed, when I saw it reflected in Alice's face of terror as she sat on the bed during my violences of spasm. After an hour or two, in which I may almost say that I was tempest-tossed (for I had to heave myself continually up and down with my hands on the bed or the arms of a chair to get breath), it would subside into a sort of ground-swell, faint and hollow and long-drawn, and give hopes of a cessation; and then it would rise again, sometimes suddenly, sometimes slowly, into storm and fury; and so, by turns fierce or moderate, the long nights wore away: nor were the days by any means exempt. And now it is all over,

'And birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.'

Let us hope that the brood will be birds of song, and that their songs will be of thanksgiving and praise."

The spasmodic form of disease has never returned. The cigarette which brought it to such a sudden end was made of mild tobacco in paper slightly impregnated with saltpetre; not so manufactured with any medicinal view, but merely to make it burn better. It happened to be at hand when I was advised to try smoking tobacco; and it was this particular combination which saved me: for neither saltpetre nor tobacco, pure and simple, or in other proportions, was of much use.

My illness disabled me from attendance at my office, and I tendered my resignation; which, as I was quite equal to work at home, was not accepted. But a vacancy occurred in the office of chief clerk, to which I was entitled to succeed, with an additional £200 a year; and for this

office attendance could not be dispensed with. In a letter which Mr. Merivale, the under secretary of state, addressed to me on the occasion, he described the duties. They were mainly "seeing visitors, controlling servants, managing the interior of the department, etc., not very onerous, but requiring a kind of house-dog-like punctuality and savageness." For these duties, even if attendance had been possible, I was not the dog that was wanted. But I was unwilling to forfeit the £200 per annum, and I wrote to Mr. Gladstone, then chancellor of the exchequer (29th September, 1859), to ask what he would advise.

I adverted to the anomalies of my case. I had served in one grade from the earliest of my thirty-five years' service; the duties I had performed, "while continually important, had been from time to time duties in which the largest national interests were involved." In 1848, circumstances, and a state of health which was then weaker than it had been in the twelve years succeeding, had led me to decline the office of under secretary of state; in the present year my better health had been interrupted by a new disorder, local in itself, but for a time superinducing, through mistaken treatment, general loss of strength; my general health was now nearly restored, and I was strong as against work, though not as against weather; my spasmodic complaint, a sort of wildcat that sleeps by day and wakes by night, though very harassing when upon me, affected my general condition little more than by depriving me of rest; and the doctors told me the disorder would be transitory, and might leave me suddenly and at once, though it was impossible to say when. Under these circumstances it appeared to me that the house-dog's duties might be devolved upon some other dog, leaving my own duties unchanged, but not depriving me of the £200 a year to which I had become entitled.

I sent a copy of my letter to Lord Grey, and he expressed his entire concurrence: "As you state," he writes, "there is no comparison whatever in the real importance of the two posts. The duties which you have hitherto performed require very high intellectual qualities, and it would be impossible to replace your judgment and experience in their discharge. The proper duties of the chief clerk, on the other hand, though requiring a person in whom implicit confidence can be placed, and very important in their way, are yet, for the most part, either mechanical, or of such a character as to require rather the qualifications of a strict non-commissioned officer in the army than those needed in a person who has to give his advice and assistance in deciding upon questions of state policy."

Mr. Gladstone's reply was substantially favorable to my views: "Before I came to that part of your letter which touches on the point, the idea bubbled up in my mind that the question really ought to be, not about the succession to the chief clerkship merely, but about the chief clerkship itself. This is not merely the keen nose of a chancellor of the exchequer snuffing slaughter like a raven from afar, but it is founded on my own views and recollections, as well as mightily strengthened by your statements." What he was prepared to approve, therefore, was the abolition of the chief clerkship, with a reservation of the additional salary to be allotted to the senior clerk who might be best entitled to it; that is, on the present occasion, myself.

The chief clerk did not actually retire till nearly the end of the year. Till then I had not been in direct communication with the Duke of Newcastle (then secretary of state) upon the subject; but on the 14th December he wrote to me to announce the vacancy and to explain the

difficulty in which it placed him. After adverting to my own qualifications and to the nature of the duties of the chief clerk, with its minor details and the attendance it involved, he wrote: "I fear your health will not allow of this attendance. I doubt whether you could act by deputy. I dread your attempting the labor and then being obliged to leave us altogether." And his letter concludes by inviting me to suggest a solution: "I have now frankly told you my difficulties and my misgivings. In return I ask you, as a friend, to be equally frank with me. Enable me, if you can, to do what is agreeable to you and is not incompatible with the good of the public service."

In reply I sent my correspondence with Mr. Gladstone and Lord Grey, and, pointing to the proposal that the £200 a year by which the salary of chief clerk exceeded that of the office I filled should be converted into a good-service pension and the duties be devolved upon others, I left the question to be dealt with by his grace in the way which might appear to him to be most for the public interests. I heard no more of the matter for four or five months. I believe there were difficulties about the abolition of the chief clerkship and the substitution of a salary to be disposed of on the *detur digniori* principle. No doubt it involved a conflict of interests in the reversion between the expectant heroes and the expectant house-dogs. It was in deference to the interests of the latter, I suppose, that the chief clerkship was not abolished, and at last, on the 3d May, 1860, the duke wrote to me again. He told me that he had been trying in vain to make an arrangement with the treasury by which I should be made an additional assistant under secretary, with the £200 increment of salary, and that the salary had been agreed to but not the title, lest it should be claimed in the other secretary of states' departments. He added: "I feel

that it is quite possible that a man who has refused the under-secretaryship may prefer *not* to have the title of second assistant under secretary." And he intimated that, though remaining nominally where I was, the intention was that I should be subordinate to the secretary of state only and independent of any intermediate authority; and he announced his selection of Sir Frederick Rogers to be under secretary of state, *vice* Mr. Merivale, who had resigned.

I replied 4th May, 1860: "You have done for me all that I asked or desired, and I knew very well there must be difficulties in your way to account for the delay. As to the name of chief clerk, I had no more wish for that than for the duties, and both are very fitly disposed of by the arrangements you have made. As to the title of second assistant under secretary, I should have valued it as a token of your regard and consideration, and the endeavor you have made to give it me has the same value in my eyes. In any other point of view it is not material; not that I have ever affected to consider adventitious distinctions as nothing worth; for, as long as we are in the world, what the world prizes must be worth something to us, directly or indirectly. But in early life literary distinction seeming to be more within my reach, what ambition was in me naturally spent itself there; and in later life ambition of any kind seems rather out of date. So I am well content to rest where I am, with the additional satisfaction of knowing that you would have wished, if you could have managed it, to make my title more in accordance with my work. I dare say Gladstone would gladly have gone along with you if his outlooks for the exchequer would have allowed him. I have another subject of satisfaction—in the appointment of Rogers. The choice of a permanent under secretary is, in my estima-

tion, by far the most important function which it can devolve upon a secretary of state to exercise. The direct consequences of that one act extend far and wide through the whole colonial empire, and last, in all probability, for a long series of years. A bad appointment to this office is the deadliest blow that can be dealt to the colonial service, and a good one is the greatest blessing that can be bestowed upon it. My personal intercourse with Sir F. Rogers has not been much, but I have had large and constant opportunities of observing him in business, and I have long been of opinion that he has practical abilities of the highest order, a just and penetrating judgment, and a habit of searching out every question that is before him in its whole length and breadth, and yet dealing with it conclusively and succinctly. To this is to be added personal dispositions and character which everybody seems to appreciate, and the influence of which will be felt, not only by those with whom he transacts business face to face, but, what is of more importance to the public interests, by governors and public servants in distant possessions, who do not always meet with an equal measure of courtesy and consideration for their feelings. As to the more avowedly independent management of West Indian affairs which your grace has in view for me, I have no wish for it on my own account; on the contrary, I should be glad of any intermediate supervision which would give me an additional security against errors."

And so was brought to a close this arduous achievement of £200 a year. But the simultaneous change in the office of the under secretary of state led to another and a very different acquisition. My close official association, beginning then and continuing for the next ten years, with Sir Frederick Rogers (now Lord Blachford), enriched those years and all that have followed with a new and very

precious friendship—such a friendship as can rarely be formed after youth has spent its ardors and middle age its appetite for new interests and its powers of adaptation.

By this time most of the friends of my youth had been taken from me. I can understand, but I cannot share, the feeling expressed by Landor:

> "Oh, my lost friends! Why were ye once so dear,
> And why were ye not fewer, oh ye few!"

I not only understand, but devoutly adopt the sentiment of a greater poet:

> "'Tis better to have loved and lost
> Than never to have loved at all."

But whichever feeling be better and whichever worse, there can be no doubt that, among the blanks which present themselves for our contemplation in old age, few are more melancholy than the erasures made by death in the list of early friendships, not likely, in the ordinary course of things, to find any set-off in the reckonings of life that remain.

I was in my sixtieth year when my intimacy with Sir Frederick Rogers began; he about ten years my junior. The opinion of his powers which I expressed in my letter to the Duke of Newcastle was founded upon his work in the offices he had held jointly for many years of law adviser to the colonial department and commissioner of emigration. When his work in the wider sphere of under secretary of state came under my cognizance my admiration ran higher still; and I think I can now say that, looking back through forty-eight years of official experience, in the course of which I served under twenty-six secretaries of state and a somewhat larger number of under secretaries, I have not known any one of either class who was a greater administrator, and, I think, only two who were

on a par with him in their intellectual range and powers. What was peculiar to himself was a combination of force with circumspection—what, I think, in some of my letters I have described as a sure-footed impetuosity. No qualities of the intellect, however, nor, I am afraid, his moral and spiritual qualities either, though of the highest order, would have done much to bring about the relations which grew up between us in a few years. There was more than that; but it is better not to say, even if I could say, what are the other qualities that make a friendship all a friendship can be, beginning soon or late, and all one might have supposed it could not be, beginning in the latter years of life.

Chapter XII.

LIFE AT HOME.—"ST. CLEMENT'S EVE."—AUBREY DE VERE'S POETRY.

Anno Dom. 1860. Æt. 60.

From Downing Street I go home to Sheen: "We are living our life," I write to Lady Mary Labouchere, in January, 1860, "under the same conditions as before, comfortably and pleasantly; all well except myself, and I have as much health as is necessary for happiness and for work, which I suppose is as much as any man has occasion for. . . . The children are good and happy, and one advantage of confinement to the house is that I see a good deal more of them than I used to do. . . . Harry (five and a half) comes to me in bed at half-past seven, and we read the 'Arabian Nights' till breakfast; and in the course of the day, whenever he can spare half an hour of his valuable time, he comes for a few chapters of the 'Morte d'Arthur:' and the baby frequents my knee, and has a great deal to say to me in her *fractâ loquelâ*,

'Sweeter than all the heathen Greek
That Helen spoke when Paris wooed;'

though it *is* heathen Greek to me, and I can scarcely hold a conversation with her unless I have one of the other children to act as interpreter. You ask whether I read much. Yes, I do. And this, too, confinement favors; and in the watches of the night (for I am many hours in bed and not many asleep) I feel as if I returned to something like the silence and seclusion of my bachelor's lodging of

twenty and thirty years ago, and as if it might be possible for me to write as well as read."

And it *was* possible, for it was at this time that "St. Clement's Eve" was written.

The choice of a subject had always been, and was still, a perplexing preliminary. In writing to Aubrey de Vere to acknowledge an article on the play by him in the *North British Review*—an article which I said was "a beautiful work, and in itself a sort of poem, or, at least, a garland in which the poetry is to the prose as the flowers to the leaves"—I said something of these impediments of the threshold:

"Among the various pregnant observations your article contains there is none more useful to poets than that on the care to be used in the choice of a subject. But perhaps few, even of literary men, are aware how difficult it is to find a subject for a drama which combines the chief requisites—how impossible to find one which combines all or many of the requisites one would require. With me, owing to my limited knowledge of history and of legendary writings, the difficulty of choice resolved itself into a choice of difficulties. I would have extended the limits of my knowledge if I had had more time or more activity. . . . 'Philip Van Artevelde' was suggested to me by Southey; Macaulay wrote me a letter suggesting 'Mary Queen of Scots;' Lord Aberdeen another, suggesting the conquest of Naples by Charles VIII. It is only surprising that one out of three subjects suggested by men who had not themselves written plays should have proved practicable. I examined the other subjects carefully and could make nothing of them. Each presented some brilliant or impressive features, but also some fatal defects. . . . As to 'St. Clement's Eve,' my asthma obliged me to sit up in bed some hours of every night in

1859, and this gave me time for reading. I read thirteen volumes of Barante—more history than, I dare say, I had read for thirteen years before—and I came across the story. I do not find so much fault with it as you do. I think the defects were rather in the chooser than in the choice, and that the subject was suited to *me*. Nor do I recognize the dilemma you mention in the case of Iolande. A girl does not fall in love and pick herself up again in an instant, be she as pure and pious as she may; and if, within less than twenty-four hours, Iolande did not feel sure that she had cast out every atom of amorous sentiment, why should we not impute it either to the conditions of humanity refusing annihilation by revulsion, or to the self-distrust of a humble nature led by the disposition of a devout nature to accuse herself rather than give up her belief in the efficacy of a relic? If you want anything holier or nobler than what Iolande is meant to be, I think you must pass out of the truths of humanity, and also out of those ranges of fiction in which the highest purposes of the drama are to be accomplished."

Aubrey explained that he had no quarrel with Iolande, but only with the nature of the theme which required that Iolande should quarrel with herself.

The play was published in June, 1862, and met with a much better reception than "The Virgin Widow." Of an edition of fifteen hundred, nine hundred had been sold in six months, and I think it was in the next six months that another edition appeared; not separately, however, but with my other plays and with my poems in a collective edition of three volumes. It was a mistake not to publish the volumes severally as well as collectively. They went off fast enough for a few months, but for the ensuing three years very slowly. Then they were sepa-

rated, and each prospered again in its degree, the more popular giving the less popular a loving lift.

"Did I tell you" — "you" being James Spedding — "that my plays had made a leap in 1868 to more than treble their previous sale? Since the beginning of this year (1869) I am told that they have been selling at six times the rate of the years before 1868. Little as I like the public, I am beginning to think rather well of it. It must be applying its heart unto wisdom."

This was the account given me by the publishers; but the "six times" must have been an exaggeration, or, if not, must have represented a merely casual and momentary impulse.

Though my spasmodic malady had come to an end in 1859, the bronchial membrane had been permanently injured, and for a portion of every day and night there was a sense of irritation in the chest which for some years was very troublesome, and to this day has never been entirely removed. As late as the end of 1861 (10th December) I write to Lady Mary: "As to myself, I believe I am rather better, if anything, than I was last winter; but I have the old hedgehog in my chest still, and I never leave the house except in a carriage. You inquire what are my habits of life? I smoke tobacco or stramonium, or both, three times in the day and twice in the night. As to occupations, I begin the day at seven o'clock and work at my pouch till nine, when it goes to the post. After breakfast I work and read till six o'clock or thereabouts, when I look for a little music; then comes something in the nature of a dinner at seven, after which miscellaneous diversions or transactions, and at a little after eight, having been duly applauded or reproved by Alice, according to my deserts, I betake myself to bed; for about that time the hedgehog begins to be troublesome,

and I am best in bed, where I smoke him out, and then end the day, as I began it, with official business, read the *Times*, and sooner or later go to sleep.

"I hear that your new house is a beautiful one. There are few things I should like better than to pay you a visit in it, but my account of myself shows you the impossibility; and I suppose the affection of the chest is organic, and that the hedgehog will be as long-lived as myself—in which case long life to him!"

When "St. Clement's Eve" was published, I think the questionable practice of sending presentation copies to acquaintances as well as friends was still more prevalent than it is now (1876), and I am not sure that I kept within even the large limits then usual. The number of authors and books has increased and multiplied continually for a couple of centuries, and if Dean Swift's contemporaries are looking down, they must see how little cause they had to grumble. Since the "Tale of a Tub" was published in 1704, the number has become probably one hundred times what it was when the crowd assembled to see the mountebank in Leicester Fields. We are now a trouble to many as well as to each other, and I am afraid that most presentees would rather dispense with the present than have to invent the necessary letters of eulogy and thanks. The presentees of "St. Clement's Eve," however, executed their troublesome task with much courtesy and kindness; and I hope without too much vexing their consciences for what they said:

"For lying hath degrees and difference."

Southey once told me that the only insincerity that could be justly laid to his charge was in writing this sort of letter; and if it is a fault, it is one with which I am chargeable myself. The excuse for it is analogous to that which will be generally admitted, for saying to a visitor "I am

glad to see you," when in point of fact one is not glad. The usages of society demand some complimentary language of the kind; the person to whom it is addressed knows, or ought to know, that the language is employed in a sense to be construed by usage; and so construed it need not, unless elaborately false, convey anything culpably deceptive.

Among the presentees of "St. Clement's Eve" was my old friend and benefactor, Sir Henry Holland. He wrote to me with all his habitual kindness; but he had one fault to find, and what it was will be seen in my reply: "The objection you allege to archaistic language was some time ago alleged against me by another, for whose critical judgment also I feel the highest respect. I had answers to make—how far worthy of your consideration and his I know not—which are these: I said that this region of writing is a region of art and artifice or artificial devices; that verse itself is artificial, and one of its purposes is to remove the reader from the language of common life; that the language of poetry differs from that of prose and from that of real life, not in rhyme and rhythm only, but also in fabric and inflection, and, therefore, the additional artifice of warping it to an antique model is matter of degree rather than of principle; that in considering the language of English dramatic poetry we have to bear in mind that the Elizabethan dramatists have made their own language almost the vernacular tongue of our drama, insomuch that, for my own part, writing under the second nature of art, it comes more easily to me to use their language than my own; and, finally, that the Elizabethan language is intrinsically and essentially far nobler and more impressive and significant than any which has been spoken or written since.

"Still the main question must be, what is the actual

effect upon the reader of this imitation, necessarily (as you observe) imperfect, of an antiquated speech? All the arguments in the world will not justify it if the effect is bad. And such, it appears, it actually is upon you and others of the class of minds to which pre-eminently a poet would desire to address himself. If it be equally so with the majority of such minds, there is nothing more to be said. I cannot venture to assume that the majority is with me. I can only hope it may be so. I am sure it would be against me if I were to imitate antique language elaborately and in detail. But with me, now, whatever may have been the case originally, the imitation is not studious, but for the most part unconscious. The habit of art has formed a mould into which, when composing dramatic poetry, my thoughts naturally throw themselves, and out of which they proceed in the semblance, more or less imperfect, of Elizabethan speech. There is one other consideration which may, I think, be taken into account. If there are injurious effects produced by employing an antique diction, would there not also be some that are injurious from using that of our own time? Into the mixed drama which I write, *familiar* colloquy not unfrequently enters. If I were to use modern language in this, I should be apprehensive that the effect would be that of a play acted by daylight instead of lamplight. Such are my pleas *valeant quantum.*"

Sir Henry admitted their validity, and withdrew his objection.

Whither I went and what I was about next is mentioned in a letter to Lady Minto, 24th March, 1864: "I am to set off for the seaside the day after to-morrow, and before I go I must send you a sort of a sigh about my departure happening before your arrival. You ask me why we go at this time, and my answer is, for the lucre of

gain. None of our friends will pay us fifteen guineas a week for our company, and even mere strangers will pay us that money for our room. So what can a man do with the mercenary feelings of age creeping upon him and warring against his affections? . . . I have been busy in preparing a selection from Aubrey de Vere's poems, which Macmillan has undertaken to publish in his most ornate style, *at his own risk.* This last point is a material one for Aubrey, who has published five volumes since 1852, at no small sacrifice, and observed the other day, with some justice, that he could not be considered a poor man, inasmuch as it was in his power at any moment to double his income simply by laying down his pen. From the one thousand two hundred pages of these five volumes I have selected about three hundred and fifty, which, with a few new poems, will make a volume not forbidding in bulk, and, I should have said, with some assurance if old experience had not made me diffident, captivating by its contents. Aubrey started for Rome just as Macmillan had agreed to publish it, and I have been correcting the proofs as foster-father, and also writing an article for *Fraser's Magazine* upon it—a sort of thing I had not done for many years. And I find it a very difficult task; for I desired to avoid panegyric, the public mind not being prepared for it; and I desired to avoid censure, as not falling in with my views, purposes, and opinions; and if one is to review poems without either praising or blaming them, what has one got to say of them? The question was not easy to answer, and I sat hour after hour, like the Persian poet, 'scratching the head of thought with the nails of despair;' but at last I have succeeded in inventing enough of neutral nothings to fill interspaces between extracts, and serve for prose settings to the poetical gems.

"I wish there were any hope of a walk with you through

the pine woods of Bournemouth after your London season. . . . By the time the shade of the woods is acceptable we shall be in and among them, while you will be thridding the thickets of society, and gathering grapes from the thorns and figs from the thistles. I should be glad to be with you though, there or anywhere."

Of the volume mentioned to Lady Minto I wrote to another correspondent: "Have you read the volume of selections from Aubrey de Vere? In the process of selecting, correcting proofs, and reviewing in *Fraser*, I have read them, and almost all his poems, many times over; I hardly know how many times — countless times; I have almost lived with them through the winter; and the ever-growing effect of them almost *convinces* me of what I was only *persuaded* before—that they have another destiny before them than that which the world's present neglect would seem to promise. He is not the *most* poetical poet of this century; but of the poetical poets he is by far the most intellectual, next after, if after, Coleridge and Wordsworth. If the justness of his intellect were equal to its range of power, few among the poets would be greater than he."

Twelve years have gone by since that letter was written, and the appreciation of Aubrey de Vere's poetry, though less limited than in 1864, has not extended beyond the bounds within which the appreciation of Milton and Wordsworth and Coleridge was confined for about thirty years after the publication of their best poems.

My own faith is unshaken. It is founded chiefly upon those of his poems—and they are the many—which are thoughtful without being doctrinal, or pre-eminently beautiful without being either. The faults of his poetry belonging to one period of its production are faults of exuberance. Thoughts and lights from high and low and

far and near crowd in upon his mind, and singleness of effect is sacrificed. But his gifts are manifold. No man's poetry was ever more diverse in kind than his. And what is true of one kind, would be distinctly untrue and the very opposite of the truth if said of another. He can be gracefully light as well as profoundly obscure, pathetically simple as well as profusely ornate.

In 1852, after the publication of his "May Carols," he and I had a correspondence in which I attributed his unpopularity "to the non-exercise of that preliminary act of the imagination by which a man conceives his audience." He was surprised that the scheme and purpose of the "May Carols" had not been perceived even by its critics. They were not written, he said, as separate poems, but had been thought out together before they were individually composed. They were intended each of them to take up one idea, and only one, and conjointly to illustrate Christianity with its field contemplated from one especial mountain-top as a point of view, that spot being the doctrine of the incarnation. I should have been surprised if the latent doctrines *had* been discovered, though I might be equally surprised if the exceeding grace and beauty of the poetry could be overlooked. And I wrote:

"It would be worth while to search out, if one could, the difference between the mystery which has been found more or less attractive in some poetry, and the obscurity which has been found repulsive in other. I do not, myself, know what it consists in; but perhaps one sort of mysterious poetry which is attractive is that which has relation to some *familiar* mystery of the human mind, which most people look into and no one hopes to penetrate. The absence of any such hope or expectation releases the mind from straining at conclusions and licenses to a sort of luxury of dimness. But in a dogmatic phi-

losophy which claims assent and belief, obscurity is not tolerated."

From the obscurity I found fault with in the "May Carols," I proceeded to find fault with another kind of obscurity in another series of poems. These were published in a volume called "Inisfail," and were designed to illustrate the successive ages of Irish history, legendary or other. Many of them are full of force and spirit; but they need much to be illustrated by a knowledge, not often to be met with, of the history of which they are designed to be illustrations.

"With regard to 'Inisfail,' I should think there is little or nothing of obscure or controvertible doctrine to be objected to in it; but there is often more or less obscurity as to the historical topics; and, so far as the earlier history of Ireland is concerned, I am not surprised that it should not be regarded popularly as a poetical theme. It is true I know nothing about it; but *all* early history seems to represent nothing else than the conflict of barbarous and perfidious tribes and persons, of whom one is so like another that when some are oppressed and trampled upon, one's comfort is that they only suffer what, if they could, they would inflict. People take no interest in the Heptarchy. Then as to the later history of Ireland, I suppose it might be regarded as a poetical theme by the Irish; but the Irish read no poetry and buy no books; and by English readers it is regarded under the disadvantage of an antipathy to the Irish national character and a consciousness of an antipathy on the part of the Irish to the English national character. I, who have a sympathy with both antipathies, can probably estimate the effect of them better than you. And when you say that you were not prepared for the effect because you yourself read with pleasure poems, such as those of Shelley and others, to the

religious and political tendencies of which you are utterly opposed, you reckon as if there were ten thousand Aubrey de Veres who would read yours."

When "Inisfail" was published, Sir Francis Doyle (then receiver-general of the customs, an office which he did not appreciate so highly as that of professor of poetry at Oxford, which he filled in after-years) was staying with us at Sheen; and an inquiry of his may be quoted as illustrating my notion of the unhappy ignorance of early Irish history which the poems had to encounter: "But who *is* the Sugane Earl? because he speaks of the Sugane Earl as if it was the chairman of the board of customs, and everybody *must* know who he was."

Having said quite enough of Aubrey's faults as a poet, I will conclude with a few words from a letter of mine to a lady who had been able to discover some faults in him as a man: "As to Aubrey de Vere's faults, he has fewer than anybody that I know, and it would be well for you and me if we could throw our faults and virtues into hotchpot with Aubrey's and share and share alike accordingly. I should ride off like a beggar set on horseback, and you would be lifted from a comfortable competence to a situation in which you would look down upon the kingdoms of the earth and the glory thereof."

No; I will *not* so conclude. Having dwelt upon the difficulties to be met with in some of Aubrey de Vere's poems, I will not take leave of them without a sort of farewell from the many more of them which, to my mind at least, suggest no difficulty except the difficulty of finding anything else like them:

> "Thus in mirth
> And solemn talk and prayer, that brother band,
> In the golden age of Faith, with great free heart
> Gave thanks to God that blissful eventide,

A thousand and four hundred years and more
Gone by. But now clear rang the compline bell,
And two by two they wended towards their church
Across a space for cloisters set apart,
Yet still with wood-flowers sweet, and scent beside
Of sod that evening turned. The night came on;
A dim ethereal twilight o'er the hills
Deepened to dewy gloom. Against the sky
Stood ridge and rock unmarked amid the day:
A few stars o'er them shone. As bower on bower
Let go the waning light, so bird on bird
Let go its song. Two songsters still remained,
Each feebler than a fountain soon to cease,
And claimed somewhile across the dusking dell,
Rivals unseen, in sleepy argument,
Each the last word: a pause; and then once more
An unexpected note: a longer pause;
And then, past hope, one other note—the last.
A moment more the brethren stood in prayer;
The rising moon upon the church-roof new
Glimmered; and o'er it sang an angel choir
'Venite Sancti.' Entering, soon were said
The psalm 'He giveth sleep' and hymn 'Lætare;'
And in his solitary cell each monk
Lay down, rejoicing in the love of God."*

* "Legends of St. Patrick," p. 207. The Arraignment.

Chapter XIII.

BOURNEMOUTH.

Anno Dom. 1861–62. Anno Æt. 61–62.

I have been more coherent as to topics than as to time, and must go back a little.

In 1861 we found our way to Bournemouth. We chose it in that year for the place of our abode during the two summer months usually spent by the seaside.

"The place is beautiful beyond any seaside place I have seen except the Riviera, and the air is dry and pure, unacquainted with anything but the sea, the pine-woods which reach for miles inland, and the sandy soil in which they grow. We contemplate buying a house here, or building one. The building of our house at Sheen is some encouragement to another enterprise of the kind. It certainly answered better than 'building the lofty rhime.' And Bournemouth seems to have the elements of prosperity and growth which would make houses a good speculation, as well as the aptitudes which would make a house eligible for us to live in when we come to the seaside."

So I wrote, in May, 1861, to James Spedding; and by December we had found a house half built, which we bought and finished to our fancy. "We are to live in it in the summer and let it in the winter," I wrote to Lady Mary; "while the Sheen house is to be lived in in the winter and let in the summer; and in this way we hope to make money and be well housed, and to harmonize the comforts of life with the lucre of gain."

Alice, it appears, had gone down to Bournemouth the day before with three vans of furniture. "I believe this is the first time in her life that she has been separated from her children. It was not without tears from more fountains than one; but it will be only for a week, or perhaps two weeks. The five-years-old girl woke at ten o'clock last night, troubled with the thought that she had not written to her mother; and she could not be got to sleep again till she had dictated a letter to the nurse, to be sent in the morning.

At Bournemouth, not perhaps in its small beginnings in 1861, but in after-years, when it had rapidly grown into a first-rate watering-place, with many visitors for long terms and not a few residents, we could live with the friends we made in a way to know and share more of their interior life than was possible in London or its suburbs.

My family formed new attachments. It was a little too late in life for me to do quite that. From Bournemouth I wrote to Theodosia Spring Rice, some years later: "We are to move home to Sheen at the end of this month. The girls will be sorry to make the exchange. They have several friends here, and they have hardly any at Sheen. I do not care, having no friends at either. Perhaps Sheen is the better place for me, inasmuch as London is not far off, on the one hand, and Pembroke Lodge near, on the other; and my *old* friends are the friends available for me. For the young I was not much of a companion by the time that we began to frequent Bournemouth. . . . In London, if I have no young friends, I have two or three good old ones resident, and some phantoms of the young flitting by now and then. Edie Lytton promises me a visit, with her poetical husband, if they are detained in this country till October; and now

and then the other of the twins* makes her appearance. I used to warn them, whatever else they did, not to marry heroes or poets; and Edie married a poet, and Lizzie a hero. Good advice is thrown away upon girls in these matters; but a special Providence seems to have spared them the consequences of disregarding mine."

If I had not, then at least, made any absolute friendships at Bournemouth, yet there were social interests round about me which had their value. Wordsworth says, in one of his sonnets:

> "I am not one who much or oft delights
> To season his fireside with personal talk."

But Miss Fenwick, who for one portion of his life knew more of his fireside than anybody out of his family, and in some respects, I think, more of him than he knew of himself, told me that, in saying so, he was mistaken; and that no one liked more to season his fireside with personal talk; that is, if we are to use the language of disparagement, with "gossip." And why should he not? To a poet, seeking to understand human life and nature, every detail of it may be instructive; and if "the meanest flower that blows" can give him

> "Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears,"

so also the least and most trivial incidents of human life may not be without interest and significance. To the frivolous all things are frivolous; to the ill-natured and unkind everything in their neighbors' affairs that comes to their knowledge may be an occasion for uncharitable comment. But that is no reason why others should not take note of them in another spirit. If my dramatic days had not been nearly over when I began to know Bournemouth, there was a good deal to be seen there of life and character which my plays might have been the better for.

* Lady Lytton and Lady Loch, twin daughters of Edward Villiers.

One thing came to my knowledge which I had not observed before: I found that the most simple, ingenuous, and undisguised of one's fellow-creatures will sometimes be the most perplexing of all. In them human nature is itself; and its wonderful inconsistency, when occasion discloses it, comes upon one by surprise. In other natures —those which are more or less studiously self-constructed —one is not led to believe that one knows all about them, and one is not in the same degree unprepared for the things that may come to light when a light is struck.

And this came in support of what I had long felt—that, in the dramatic representation of human nature it is possible for self-consistency of character to be too sedulously sought.

What Bournemouth was when we took possession of our house in the spring of 1862, is to be gathered from another letter (23d May) to Lady Mary: "We like our new house very much. It is a size smaller than our Sheen house, but large enough for us, our children, and a stranger within our gates. Nor are we less pleased than before with the hills and groves and pine forest, and glimpses of the sea seen through them. As to the live beauty and the humanities, the 'residents,' as they are called, consist, I believe, of two clergymen, two doctors, three widows, and six old maids. Of these, the doctors and two of the widows have families. The clergymen and the old maids have none. The vicar thinks of nothing but his duties—laborious and devoted, with a singular austerity of manner and aspect. He looks like the Commination Service incarnate. The curate is handsome, simple, dutiful, and soft. The doctors are intelligent. Of the widows I have only seen one; she is all purity and refinement, but has no more taste than the white of an egg; and having been betrayed by our stupid custom into putting on widow's weeds (I don't

know how long ago), does not know how to put them off again. The old maids are very various. Alice says there is generally more difference between one old maid and another than between one and another of married women. One or two of them are interesting; one with the ardors of her youth hoarded, not spent. The beach does not, at this season, at least, present the groups which I have been accustomed, at some seaside places, as I think I told you, to contemplate curiously at a distance, with a view to some surreptitious approach and the picking out of some interesting new acquaintance. But there is an old gray-and-white cat in the house—not of the aristocratic order of cats—homely, friendly to man. The children range about the woods and on the hills, and are well and happy."

Since 1861 we have passed four or five months of every year at Bournemouth, and I think the elders have preferred it to Sheen. "We like Bournemouth best," I wrote to Lady Mary, "not for its beauty only, but also because the social atmosphere is warmer than that of the neighborhood of London; for London casts its shadow as far as Sheen, and neighbors at Sheen are not so much to each other as neighbors at Bournemouth. The attraction of London for all prevails over the attraction of each for each."

Chapter XIV.

FRESHWATER BAY.—MR. AND MRS. CAMERON AND THEIR CHILDREN.—MR. AND MRS. TENNYSON AND THEIRS.

Anno Dom. 1860-62. Anno Æt. 60-62.

In 1860 the Camerons left Putney Heath, where they had been living for some years, and betook themselves to a house which they had bought at Freshwater Bay, in the Isle of Wight. And as our adoption of Bournemouth for a summer abode occasioned a breaking-up and removal from Sheen to Bournemouth and from Bournemouth to Sheen in every spring and autumn, and as I was found to be in the way on such occasions, I was sent for a week or two every spring and autumn to the Camerons, where I was *not* found to be so much in the way. It was a house, indeed, to which everybody resorted at pleasure, and in which no man, woman, or child was ever known to be unwelcome.

Conventionalities had no place in it; and though Cameron was more of a scholar and philosopher than a country gentleman, the house might easily have been mistaken for that of the old English squire, who is said to have received his guests with the announcement, kind though imperious —"This is Liberty Hall, and if everybody does not do as he likes here, by God I'll make him!"

One day, I remember, a lady and gentleman and their daughter came to luncheon, and Mrs. Cameron, wishing to introduce them to me, took the liberty of asking them what were their names. She had met them in the steam-

boat when crossing from Lymington to Yarmouth the day before, and had invited them without knowing anything about them. Another day she met a tourist on the cliff, without a hat; and being asked what had become of it, he said it had been blown into the sea. Whereupon she told him he must not go about with no hat to his head, and he must call at her house and she would find him one.

The attractions of the house, as well as the easy access to it, soon became known far and wide, and it swarmed with guests. Cameron himself, agreeable as he was in society, and much more than agreeable, was not particularly fond of it. Nevertheless, he seemed quite content that the house should be always full, and when he preferred seclusion he went to bed.

The social ways and aspects I became acquainted with at Freshwater Bay came out occasionally in the letters I wrote during my vernal and autumnal visits. One of the earliest of these was in April, 1861: and what I first met with is mentioned in a letter to Lady Mary (12th April, 1861):

"Shortly after my arrival, I went to the schoolroom to pay my respects to the governess; and there I found, at her studies, besides the two small Cameronian boys, a very pretty little girl of thirteen, whom I supposed to be a visitor or the child of a neighbor taking a casual lesson. She proved to be a beggar who, with her mother, had begged of Mrs. Cameron on Putney Heath some months ago. They were Irish, and Mrs. Cameron had got a good account of them from a priest (in Glasgow, I think), and had established them in her lodge at Putney Heath and given them work; and when she came hither she put the mother in the way of getting a living, and brought the child with her. She is very quick, and excessively fond

of reading and learning. What will become of her? If she is to be a servant, I am afraid there is no such thing as a good servant who is fond of reading. If she is to be a governess, will she be any happier than governesses who have not been beggars? Mrs. Cameron sees, I think, that these are rather puzzling questions; and, finding no satisfactory answer to them at present, is disposed to let time solve them, and guard herself against petting the beggar more than she can help. The manners and customs of her and her race (for her sisters are like her in some things), have more of hope than of reason in them, and, if foreseeing difficulties, they always expect to be able to deal with them as they arise. Still there is this to be said for them, that the humanities are stronger in them than the sentimentalities, and there is, therefore, no sentimental inconstancy in the prosecution of eccentric undertakings. The energy with which they are first set on foot does not come to an end."

What I so said was justified in the issue; and the issue was as singular as the outset. The child, as she grew up, became a parlor-maid. Occasionally she was rather naughty, and revolts of the household and no small difficulties occurred from time to time, but none were suffered to prevail. Mrs. Cameron having been seized by a passion for photography, the clever parlor-maid assisted her in it; and when an exhibition of her photographs was to take place in London, she was sent, under the care of an old housekeeper, to attend and give any information that visitors might require. One day a young gentleman made some inquiry, and, obtaining the information he sought, took away with him that and something else. For in the course of a year or two, when he had made sure of a career in the Indian civil service by distinguished success in a competitive examination, he proceeded to Freshwater

Bay, knocked at Mrs. Cameron's door, and asked her leave to pay his addresses to her parlor-maid. She inquired whether he had a father and mother, and being answered that he had, she would not allow him to see the girl till she had placed herself in communication with his parents. The father had filled high offices in India, and the family was one of some consideration. There were no small difficulties in the way of the alliance, but they were met and surmounted; and the marriage took place with the goodwill of the parents, the *girl's* mother excepted; for the Irish beggar's sense of aristocratic proprieties was much offended by this commixture of high and low.

The marriage has been a happy one; and to one fact I can bear witness, that there has not been wanting in the wife the Irish aptitude for taking, with a natural ease and grace, any social position which Providence may think fit to award. The husband has got on well in the service, and has now (in 1878) an office of £2400 a year.

A letter of mine to Alice, from Freshwater Bay, in May, 1860, begins with an allusion she would understand, to the first line of a sonnet of Shakespeare's:

"From you I have been absent in the spring."

She would understand it, for it was familiar to us both, as one which has much that lies half hidden in it.

"The absence in the spring seems to pass very pleasantly with you truants, and with me, too, pleasantly enough; though, when I looked at a deep meadow which I passed this morning, rich with buttercups and bounded with woodlands, a feeling came over me which sometimes saddens a summer's day for an hour or so, not altogether intelligibly; but when I try to make out what is the matter, I fancy it may be that there is nothing more to hope; here is the earth at its best; the feeling, I suppose, which Coleridge had in his heart when he said:

'It is the fulness and the overflow
Which, being incomplete, disquieteth me so.'

Or is it the sense of 'rapid evanescence' which Wordsworth felt, not when beautiful scenery was passing away from him, but when he was passing by it too swiftly, driving instead of walking? and which the course of nature forces one to feel in an English summer, so that

'Sadness steals
O'er the defrauded heart.'

Or is it that one misses sympathy more in fruition than in hope? for I sometimes think if you were with me all would be well. I went to Tennyson's by one of his approaches, returned by another, and saw his house from top to bottom; and, having now seen all, I do think it is the most beautifully situated house I ever beheld (Rydal Mount would, no doubt, be excepted by those who love mountains better than I do). His park is scarcely less in extent than Lord Clarendon's, delightfully varied with grove and deep pasture; in one direction, the sea at a mile off, with cliff and promontory and jutting or detached masses of rock; in another, the crest of a down, covered with gorse bloom, rising at a distance and seen over a foreground of woodland; in a third, a wide plain, with the estuary of the Solent to bound it, and river craft coming and going. I saw the children again and liked them much. The younger is certainly good-looking; the other has pleasing manners, kindly and quiet, with an interested gaze. And in the midst of all this beauty and comfort stands Alfred Tennyson, grand, but very gloomy, whom it is a sadness to see, and one has to think of his works to believe that he can escape from himself and escape into regions of light and glory."

By a subsequent letter it appears, however, that when he returned my visit, though still "haggard and woe-

begone, he grumbled agreeably enough for an hour or two."

More visits were exchanged, and I had a good deal more to say of them to Alice than it is worth while to put in print. The Tennyson children pleased me much: "I am sure you would think them very engaging creatures, gentle and social." And the Camerons' children pleased me no less. Then comes the wife of a neighboring squire, "very kind, and full of vegetables and flowers, a simple, good gentlewoman, who was seized with an ardent admiration of four heads of girls painted on the lids of four French milliners' boxes on Mrs. Cameron's table, in the style of vignettes to sheets of popular music. Mrs. Cameron gave them to her, and she seemed to think that they were treasures; and Mrs. Cameron seemed to feel like a person who has passed off base coin. But they *are* treasures to her, because the faces are beauty to her: and perhaps she has more pleasure in that beauty than we have in a Raffaello or a Fra Angelico. Better to have enjoyment without discernment than discernment without enjoyment; and how often the choice seems to lie between the two!"

I had given some account of a Captain and Mrs. B——, just married, and now they reappear: "Then came the bride, sadly at a loss to know how she was to make a glass of lemonade for the sick bridegroom. Then Alfred Tennyson, brought by surprise face to face with the bride, repeating two complimentary sentences to Mrs. Cameron's dictation, and then flying after his scattered senses, very cross at having been thrown in the way of such a difficulty."

The 2d of June was Alice's birthday, and of course on that day I was to have been at home. But, in my state of health, I was unavoidably servile to the weather: "I

know not how it is with you and your lilacs," I wrote, on the 3d June, "but here the storm is both more violent and longer-lasting than that of a week ago. I was glad that the weather yesterday should be so far decided as to leave you in no doubt as to what I would do; but such a tempest as this is enough to put you and me out of both our heads, and make us think only of those who are occupying their business on the great waters. What to-morrow may bring forth remains to be seen, and I hardly expect that such a disturbance of the elements can subside so soon. A wonderful day to be the 2d of June and your birthday. One would think it had been the birthday of the prince of the powers of the air, and that those powers had kept it after their ungracious fashion by getting drunk and fighting. It is strange that I am no worse for it. . . . Alfred Tennyson came in the morning in an agreeable mood, though it *was* in the morning. His agreeable moods are generally in the evening. After I was in bed, Mrs. Cameron wrapped a shawl round her head and went down to the beach, and, finding a most magnificent state of things there, she sent for Alfred, who joined her, and whom she left to make the most of it. He seems to be independent of weather. Mrs. Cameron says that in one of the great storms of this year he walked all along the coast to the Needles, which is six miles off. With all his shattered nerves and uneasy gloom he seems to have some sorts of strength and hardihood. There is a great deal in him that is like ——. But his tenderness is more genuine, as well as his simplicity; and he has no hostilities and is never active as against people. He only grumbles. . . . He says he does not like 'St. Clement's Eve' so well as 'Philip Van Artevelde,' but that perhaps it stands second. He wants a story to treat, being full of poetry, with nothing to put it in."

There was storm upon storm, "windows rattling all night like dead men's bones," so that my departure was again delayed; but I had the consolation of learning that the children had been grievously disappointed when the carriage which had gone to the station to bring me came back empty, and that the four-year-old baby had sobbed aloud.

It was in this year, I think, that Mrs. Cameron wrote an undated letter in which mention is made of Tennyson: "Alfred talked very pleasantly that evening to Annie Thackeray and L—— S——. He spoke of Jane Austen, as James Spedding does, as next to Shakespeare! I can never imagine what they mean when they say such things. Alfred has grown, he says, much fonder of you since your two last visits here. He says he feels now he is beginning to know you and not to feel afraid of you, and that he is beginning to get over your extreme insolence to him when he was young and you were in your meridian splendor and glory. So one reads your simplicity. He was very violent with the girls on the subject of the rage for autographs. He said he believed every crime and every vice in the world was connected with the passion for autographs and anecdotes and records; that the desiring anecdotes and acquaintance with the lives of great men was treating them like pigs, to be ripped open for the public; that he knew he himself should be ripped open like a pig; that he thanked God Almighty with his whole heart and soul that he knew nothing, and that the world knew nothing, of Shakespeare but his writings; and that he thanked God Almighty that he knew nothing of Jane Austen, and that there were no letters preserved either of Shakespeare's or of Jane Austen's; that they had not been ripped open like pigs. Then he said that the post for two days had brought *him* no letters, and that he thought there was a sort of syncope in the world as to him and to

his fame. I told him of the mad worship of Swinburne, of ——, the Pre-Raphaelite, saying that Swinburne was greater than Shelley or Tennyson or Wordsworth."

In 1862 the positions were changed. Alice and the children were in a house which she took at Freshwater Bay, I at East Sheen; and it was Alice's turn to write about all that happened. (17th April, 1862) "Alfred came down to see me yesterday, and was very cordial in inviting me up to his garret. He really does look a very grand man; and I think I should still be disposed to follow after him as before. He has all the charm of a little child as well as that of a great man, and that deep voice of his is very music to me." And on another day: "I went to Farringford and sat awhile with Mrs. Tennyson, and then he asked me to go up to his attics, and when I had said all I had to say about the beauty of his views (not quite enough to satisfy him, though, for I liked one view—*his own*—much the best, and he growled out, 'How very odd you are; one view is just as fine as the other'), he took me all over his place, which is really very lovely, and he was very kind and cordial, though full of complaints of the wickedness of mankind in general, and the special wickedness of the islanders who look at him and pick his cowslips; cordial to the girls, too, though he heard me encourage them to fill their basket from his woods." Next comes an expedition to Alum Bay: "The day glorious, as fresh as it was bright; the sea creeping gently up the sands, and the sky, deep in color and yet as clear as an Italian sky, bending over the beautiful line of exquisitely tinted cliffs, with their outline so fine in its simplicity. I doubt whether anything has ever charmed me more. Mrs. Cameron was sorry that the sea was so calm. She thought I should have found it grander in a storm. But I think she is wrong. The scene being in

itself one of such power and simplicity and force, it was all the grander for its stillness. Where power makes itself *felt* it is sometimes better unspoken."

Where one celebrated man sets up his rest, there will always be other celebrities coming and going. Alice came across one who became afterwards a very kind and constant friend. (23d April) "Mrs. Cameron and I went to tea with Mr. Jowett, to me a most agreeable man. He looks so wise and gentle and happy, and so simple. . . . I was glad to go, but I felt very shy too, as I always do when I am in society with Mrs. Cameron. She steers; and so oddly and so boldly that I always expect to find myself stuck in a quicksand or broken against a rock. . . . I left Harry, by invitation, with the little Tennyson boys, who are really noble specimens of beauty and vigor; the younger one a very vision of beauty — very like Brinsley Norton's beautiful child."

And the Cameron boys were not less goodly in her sight: "Ewen, the most agreeable of youths, gay, easy, and sweet-tempered, with a good word for every man, woman, girl, baby, or dog; and the two little boys, as refined and tender as girls."

They came every second evening to play games with her own children, while she sat in the chimney-corner with her favorite Robertson's sermons, "setting his wisdom to the tune of their gay laughter, and liking it all the better so set."

In the June following, Alice had gone to Bournemouth to prepare the way for me, and it was my turn to write from Freshwater Bay (15th June, 1862): "We dined at the Tennysons' yesterday, and in the evening he read us his new poem—a story (said to be true) which Woolner had read in the diary of a lady who was his fellow-passenger in a voyage to Australia. It is a very powerful poem,

of the genus 'Michael.' The fault of the subject, if not of the treatment, was illustrated by its effect upon one of the audience, Mrs. J——. After an hour and a half, and when the end was near, she went into hysterics. The poem is too purely painful, the pain not being the rich and pleasing pain which poetry ought to produce. It is not so colored and glorified by imaginative power as to exalt the reader above his terrestrial distress. It is, however, one more variety of the manifestation of Tennyson's genius, and it may be well that he should have so written upon such a theme; and I think that, if he were to regard the poem as I regard it, he might do much to enrich and soften the effect. Mrs. Tennyson must be much stronger than she was when you were here. She was looking less fragile than I recollect to have seen her look before, and very pretty and tender and interesting."

And now no more of Freshwater Bay for the present, except this—that I was photographed, I think, almost every day, and the photographs being sent to Alice, her opinion was more flattering to them than to me: "I like all except one of the little ones; and most of them I think very grand; decidedly grander than anything you have yet written or lived; so I begin to expect great things of you."

There is a feature of my life, conspicuous in these photographs, which dates from this period, and the importance of which far be it from me to underrate. This is my beard. In 1859 my hand was so liable to be shaken by asthmatic spasms that the razor was not safe in it, and was laid by. In the last days of that year I notified in a letter to one of my girl friends the small beginnings of what was so soon to be developed into the phenomenon presented by Mrs. Cameron's art in multiform impersonations of King David, King Lear, and all sorts of

"Kings, princes, prelates, potentates, and peers."

But magnificence to come is not often recognized in its germs, and so it seems to have been with my beard.

"When," I inquired, "oh, when will these bristles pass into hairs so that I may cease to be a hog? Considerations connected with my personal appearance cannot but suggest such questions from time to time, not unattended by doubts as to what may be the ultimate effect, especially as some ladies, hitherto unaccustomed to thorny ways and prickly predicaments, have been heard to swear that they will never kiss me again. I will not mention their names unless compelled to do so, because, little as I respect their daintiness, I am above exposing them. And though it is not in human nature to be insensible to such things, yet I assure you that I indulge in no vain repinings, and am on the whole a good and happy hog."

And in a letter of later date the subject is resumed: "You inquire of the color. Alas, M——, white, white as Appalachia's snows! What *can* be the reason? The cruelties of women, I think. In the case of Carlyle's beard (which, however, is only grizzled) the effect may be accounted for by time and a lifelong struggle with the nature of things, and hence it has come to be known by the name of 'Wormwood Scrubbs.' In the case of ——'s there are eight daughters, of whom the eldest two have reached the age at which filial ingratitude is fully developed, and his has therefore been not unfitly designated 'The Regan-Goneril.' But for the whiteness of mine I can think of no other cause than that I have mentioned; and I should be much obliged to you if, in concert with any of those about you whom you may think most competent to give advice, you would consider what name should be given to it. 'The Flower of Love Lies Blanching,' seems not inappropriate. Perhaps the 'Swan of Venus' may occur to you; but to this I should object, because that bird

is nearly related to another of whom it is enough to say that it is altogether unworthy to be brought into connection with the subject. Indeed, I have always thought that the ancient poets and mythologists had a sinister and malicious reference to this relationship when they provided the goddess in question with means of conveyance. *Not* the 'Swan of Venus' therefore. Had it been twenty years later I might by that time have sung my 'Vixi Puellis,' and I could have called it the 'Flag of Truce;' but it is unwise to anticipate the evil day. There is always a charm in simplicity, and, perhaps, after all, the purest taste would dictate the appellation of 'Mr. White.' I throw out these hints; but you are not only well-judging, you are also full of graceful fancies; and I shall take no decision till I hear from you."

And now I trust posterity will pardon me if I am unable to find room for further particulars concerning my beard.

Chapter XV.

DEALINGS WITH LIFE IN ITS DECLINE.—SONNET BY AUBREY DE VERE.—SPEDDING'S "LIFE AND LETTERS OF LORD BACON."—HIS ESTIMATE OF "ST. CLEMENT'S EVE."

Anno Dom. 1861–63. Anno Æt. 61–63.

With "St. Clement's Eve" I had come to an end of my poetical life, and the end was not premature. Archbishop Whately had exhorted me to make an end of it some years before. The archbishop's well-known gifts in the way of wit are an evidence that one sort of imagination was not wanting in him. But to poetry, with the single exception of Sir Walter Scott's, he avowed himself to be insensible. He overvalued my prose, however, as much as he depreciated my poetry; telling me that a resuscitated Bacon had something else to do than write verses, and that I was to leave that to the women.

I did not agree with the archbishop in his estimates; I did not think ill of my own poetry, any more than extravagantly well of my own prose; and as to poetry in itself, I rather went along with Landor: "We often hear," he says, "that such or such a thing is not worth an old song. Alas! how few things are!"

From a letter, however, written in 1858 (7th September), it appears that even then I had held myself to have reached the time of life when the fate of Bellerophon might be expected to attend any further flights: "I often think what a gift it is to be able to overvalue what one writes"—I was alluding to the advantages of practice de-

rived in youth from writing poems which I should not have written had I valued them at no more than they were worth; "It is partly the loss of this gift (natural at my time of life) which deprives me of the power or desire to write more. It is the gain of a loss; for that I should write more is far from desirable."

I did not abide by the judgment I had then formed of the decay of my powers, and I do not myself perceive any token of their decay in "St. Clement's Eve;" but I dare say it was well to stop there. Certainly, in the years that followed, my poetry could not have been continued in conjunction with my official occupations; and I regarded the official as better fitted than the poetical to fill up blanks in the latter years of life.

Touching these blanks, I had something to say when replying, in 1862, to a letter from Mrs. Edward Villiers, in which she had given expression to some natural regrets for the loss of youth: "I should be glad of a long letter from you, though it were written with a raven's quill. I quite agree with you that it is very disagreeable to grow old; and I have always thought that if *I* had been Providence I would have made life *begin* with dotage and decrepitude, and go on freshening and improving to a primal death. But as I am an humble individual and *not* Providence, I make up my mind to things as they are. . . . When one talks of one's self one never knows where to stop. But now as to *your*self, past and present. Youth is dead and gone at eight-and-twenty, and one may lament it for a year or two then; but at thirty it is time to go out of mourning. And after fifty, one no more desires to be young than to be the Archangel Michael or Mr. Wilberforce or Frank Charteris or Henry VIII. One does not desire it because one cannot conceive it. The past is so long past that it is past being a subject for regret; and as

to the future, one has to look forward to losing one's eyes and ears and brains and some of the powers of one's stomach, but one has not the loss of youth to look forward to, and that is one source of sadness removed. And to me it used to be, thirty or forty years ago, a chief source of sadness: for I was very fond of my youth, and cared more for it than for eyes, ears, brains, stomach, and all the rest. Now they have a fair share of my regard, and I shall be sorry for their decay. But when you contrast your case with mine, inasmuch as I live in a land of dreams and you among realities, I think you make too much of my imagination as a resource. It is true that from time to time I join a party of phantoms, and find them pleasant to live with on the whole, though they sometimes give me a good deal of trouble and at other times wear my nerves a little. But my main resource is in my business. Acting to a purpose with steadiness and regularity is the best support to the spirits and the surest protection against sad thoughts. Realities can contend with realities better than phantoms can; and you have realities to occupy you as well as I. For the rest, Sydney Smith's precept is, 'Take short views of life.' I had felt the same thing when I said that

> 'foresight is a melancholy gift,
> Which bares the bald and speeds the all-too-swift.'

To invest one's personal interests in the day that is passing, and to project one's future interests into the children that are growing up, is the true policy of self-love in the decline of life; and as commendable a policy as it is in the nature of self-love to adopt. Of other love it is not for me to speak; but you may find something worth saying in a sonnet of Aubrey de Vere's:

> "'Sad is our youth, for it is ever going,
> Crumbling and crushed beneath our very feet;

Sad is our life, for onward it is flowing
In current unperceived because so fleet;
Sad are our hopes, for they were sweet in sowing,
But tares, self-sown, have overtopped the wheat;
Sad are our joys, for they were sweet in blowing,
And still, oh still, their dying breath is sweet:
And sweet is youth, altho' it hath bereft us
Of much that made our childhood sweeter still;
And sweet is middle life, for it hath left us
A nearer good to cure an older ill;
And sweet are all things when we learn to prize them,
Not for their sake, but His who grants them or denies them.'

"And now God bless you, and do not think I care for you less because I am a young fellow and you are getting old."

The event of 1861 was the publication of the first two volumes of the "Life and Letters of Lord Bacon." I wrote of it to Lady Mary (23d May): "I have been reading Spedding's 'Life of Bacon' with profound interest and admiration—admiration, not of the perfect style and penetrating judgment only, but also of the extraordinary labor bestowed upon the work by a lazy man; the labor of some twenty years, I believe, spent in rummaging among old records in all places where they were to be found, and collating different copies of MSS. written in the handwriting of the sixteenth century, and noting the minutest variations of one from another—an inexpressibly tedious kind of drudgery—and, what was perhaps still worse, searching far and wide, waiting, watching, peering, prying, through long years for records which no industry could recover. I doubt whether there be any other example in literary history of so large an intellect as Spedding's devoting itself with so much self-sacrifice to the illustration of one which was larger still; and doing so out of reverence, not so much for that largest intellect as for the truth concerning it."

A gift of the volumes published in 1862 is thus acknowledged by Carlyle:

"Dear Spedding,—I have been in the '*Bacon*' up and down—a fine placid daylight attending me everywhere, disclosing curious old scenes in their now more or less ruined condition; and trust to read it all with complete deliberation one day, were I out of my own Serbonian bog, and safe on dry land again, for a little time more. You are much to be envied with the goal now in view to such a pilgrimage as few or none in our day have made. A more honestly done bit of work I do not anywhere know; and in these times I may further call it *unique* in that respect, and almost miraculous in contrast with the beautiful creatures we everywhere see busy in the *Devil's dust* line, which is a much more compendious one. Courage! I hope we shall live to *get out*, both of us, in not many months now—and will not that be a 'reward' like no other.

"I prize my copy very much and keep it as a memorial, salutary and dear to me in a good many respects. With thanks, and *Euge*, yours sincerely. T. CARLYLE."

Fourteen years more of labor were to follow, and five more volumes. And his heroic perseverance had to maintain itself against divers discouragements. As long as books last and philosophy is cared for, and there are human beings who care to investigate human intellect and human nature in one of its most wonderful manifestations, the most elaborate and authentic, and I will say also impartial, life of Lord Bacon will be read by the studious and highly cultivated classes in each generation. But these are the few, and popularity is not to be expected for biographies such as these. To the popular mind, impar-

tiality is not interesting. A story told by a bold and vigorous partisan, fastening upon the features and incidents which are sure to take effect, finding no difficulties, or, if finding them, keeping them sedulously out of sight, rounding off everything into a factitious clearness and consistency—such a story of a life will have a much better chance of popular acceptance than the other.

Popularity, therefore, had never been in question; and, in so far as some of the facts he presented ran counter to long-established misconceptions and prejudices, there was perhaps an element of *un*popularity. But, in some cases, not popular sympathy only, but the sympathy of personal friends, was found wanting; and that, not from dissent or opposition in opinion, but from simple indifference and neglect. One of them so far misconceived the situation as to congratulate him on this publication of the first two volumes as the *completion* of his task, kindly exhorting him to undertake another. This he mentioned in a letter to me, adding that, if he "had not known all that long ago, and digested all that it implied," he should have thought it discouraging. "But," he added, "I have long been aware that to ninety-nine hundredths of the reading public, including about nine tenths of my own particular friends, the most satisfactory intelligence with regard to my immortal work would be that there is no more to come, and that I might have made that announcement at the end of any volume without danger of detection. . . . In the vote upon the question whether my idea of Bacon's character is the right one I have always expected a large majority against me; and, indeed, for that matter, I care very little how it goes. All I want is, that those who would sympathize with me if they heard the story rightly told, should not be prevented by hearing it told wrong."

I think that had he duly estimated the warmth of the

interest taken in the work by some—and those not a few —he would have found that it more than made up for the indifference of others. I asked him to send me any letters he might receive on the subject, and he sent me some which I found very much what I wished to find them; but in sending them he said (April, 1862): "I do not encourage my friends to talk to me about my own performances, except where they have objections to make. If you hit, you do not want praise; if you miss, praise won't mend it. The question is, whether people who care about the subject, but do not care about me, find the book interesting; and the proof of that will be seen in the reading, even as of the pudding in the eating."

My answer was: "I return the letters, some of which are interesting enough. I do not agree with you about praise. I like it."

There are, of course, divers forms of praise to which little or no value can be attached. But praise, *in esse* or *in posse*, of the kind that expresses sympathy and gives assurance of effectiveness, can hardly be dispensed with, even by the most self-reliant and self-sustained laborer in an arduous and lifelong endeavor. I think that, for a year or two, the want of immediate and conspicuous results from the efforts of twenty years was not wholly unfelt, and the signs of it gave me much concern.

"James Spedding was here on Sunday," I wrote (22d December, 1863), "and I had a good deal of talk with him about his 'Bacon;' and in the night, that is, at three in the morning, a melancholy, black as charcoal, came over me, and I did not know whether it was owing to some charcoal biscuits which I had eaten by Mrs. Cameron's advice, to cure indigestion, or to my conversation with Spedding; but the subject which my melancholy fixed upon was the decline and fall of Spedding's interest in that great labor

of his life; for he says that it has lasted too long, and that the delusion of its value has worn itself out, and that he no longer persuades himself that it signifies greatly whether he makes good the truth about Bacon or not; and that his eyes and his memory are no longer what they were, and both research and composition are irksome to him. All this he said in a cheerful tone, but it was profoundly mournful to me."

The cheerfulness and the easy animation with which he could treat of the supposed decay of his powers may be seen in some verses which he called

"THE ANTIQUITY OF MAN: A POEM BY UNCLE JAMES.

I.

When I was a freshman old age did appear
A reverend and beautiful thing;
For knowledge must gather as year follows year,
And wisdom from knowledge should spring.

II.

But I found the same years which supplied me with knowledge
Took the power to digest it away;
And let out all the store I had gathered at college
Through leaks that increased every day.

III.

So I said it, and think not I said it in jest,
For you'll find it is true to a letter,
That the only thing old people ought to know best
Is that young people ought to know better."

Whatever truth there may be in this as a general proposition, he found himself after a year or so of rest visited by a revival of the old ardor, and the eyes and the memory proved themselves not unequal to twelve or thirteen years more of their long-enduring and not easily exhaustible efforts. The labors of more than thirty years reached their completion in 1874, and the *truth of fact*, fact developed from Bacon's life and fact throwing light

upon it, was presented to mankind in all its length and breadth and height and depth, leaving it to the justice of mankind to arrive at such truth of inference as long-established prepossessions might permit.

The work closes with a recapitulation of the testimonies borne to Bacon's virtues by those who saw him nearest in his private life, adding, "But if Bacon himself had been called on to pronounce judgment on himself, I fancy that he would have been content with some such character as Sir Henry Taylor puts into the mouth of Isaac Comnenus, describing his own:

> 'Yet is he in sad truth a faulty man;
> In slavish, tyrannous, and turbulent times
> He drew his lot of life, and of the times
> Some deep and bloody stains have fallen upon him;
> But be it said he had this honesty,
> That, undesirous of a false renown,
> He ever wished to pass for what he was;
> One that swerved much and oft, but being still
> Deliberately bent upon the right
> Had kept it in the main; one that much loved
> Whate'er in man is worthy high respect,
> And in his soul devoutly did aspire
> To be it all; yet felt from time to time
> The littleness that clings to what is human,
> And suffered from the shame of having felt it.'"

Spedding's sentiments about praise had apparently been in full possession of him when I read "St. Clement's Eve" to him and Mr. Forster; for he expressed no approbation of it. This was not satisfactory to Alice; and it would seem that her dissatisfaction came round to him through Mrs. Cameron; for "Mrs. Cameron met him at dinner the day before yesterday," I wrote, 1st March, 1862, "and the unhappy critic was compelled to declare that he thought the play beautiful—inferior to 'Van Arte-

velde' only inasmuch as it was shorter, and if not better than the 'Virgin Widow,' only not better because the 'Virgin Widow' was the best comedy that had been produced since Shakespeare. Either he said this to Mrs. Cameron, or she was enabled to persuade herself that he had said it; and the female mind in these parts is tranquil."

My own mind was not quite so, and I wrote to him, 28th February: "From what I hear, I am afraid you have been subjected to some oppression and extortion on the subject of my play, for which oppression and extortion I beg to say I am not responsible, and I hope to be acquitted of any share in the wants and discontents of women, which, if excusable in them, would not be so in me. It is true enough I rather collected from your manner that you did not much fancy the play, and that I was a little disappointed at that—more so, certainly, than I should have been at the unfavorable judgments of other men. But I think I may say for myself that I bore my disappointment very cheerfully. Indeed I have always thought that the best feature of this sort of employment is that the pleasure one takes in it is not attended by any serious drawback from ill-success. I am glad of all the success I can get; and though sorry, not at all proportionately sorry, if I get none."

He then wrote to me in commendation of the work, not the less acceptable for being expressed in his own quiet and unexaggerating tone and language: "This because you say you were a little disappointed. I know very well that you had nothing to do with the rest. If other parties require further satisfaction, I am ready to answer questions, though not to perform ecstatics."

To this I made answer, 2d March, 1862: "With what you say of the play of course I am abundantly pleased

and satisfied. Moreover, what is more important, the female mind is at rest. At the same time, it may be doubted whether you have said enough; for I received the day before yesterday a letter from a lady, intimating that my writings are a light to her feet and a lantern to her paths, and that they rank next to the Inspired Volume. I hope and believe that she is a young lady, only wise beyond her years. I once met in a railway carriage, on the way to Bath, a man who thought that the three great books of the world were the Bible, 'Pickwick,' and 'Clark on Climate.'"

What I had so far written of James Spedding was written when he was still living, and in the expectation, as he was eight years my junior (born in June, 1808), that he would survive me. In the year 1881, when crossing a street, he was run over by a cab and taken to St. George's Hospital in a state of unconsciousness. There was an interval before his death in which he was able to speak a few words, and what he said was that the accident was owing to his deafness, and no one but himself was to blame. Nothing could be more characteristic.

As he will not read what I write I may allow myself to say something more. He was always master of himself and of his emotions; but underlying a somewhat melancholy composure and aspect there were depths of tenderness known only to those who knew his whole nature and his inward life, and it is well for those by whom he is mourned if *they* can find what he has described in a letter to be his great consolation in all his experiences of the death of those he loved (experiences which had begun early and had not been few), "that the past is sacred and sanctified; nothing can happen hereafter to alter or disturb or obliterate it; nor need the recollection have any bitterness if a man does not, out of a false and morbid

sentiment, make it so for himself." . . . And he adds, "To me there are no companions more welcome, cordial, consolatory, or cheerful than my dead friends." That the deaths of which he had had experience had begun early, there is an example in that of a schoolfellow when he was at school, and from some verses written on the occasion it will be seen that there was an early beginning also of the manner of his mourning:

"I.

In a still vision I do live,
I saw thee fade from the pure light,
I know the close grave cannot give
Thy body to my sight,
I know thou canst not leave the gloom
Of that dark and jealous tomb.

II.

And yet thou art with me all the day,
Thy voice is ever in my ear;
Whate'er I do, or think, or say,
I feel that thou art near;
Thou leanest on me even now,
With thy sweet and curlèd brow.

III.

Unto the hour is fashioned
My task: unknown to thee the spot.
This book I read thou hadst not read;
These thoughts thou knewest not;
And yet I feel thee here with me,
Though here I know thou canst not be.

IV.

I dream not. To mine inner eye
In a waking vision still,
Robed in grace that cannot die,
Thine image lives, and ever will,
With aspect of unfading cheer,
And placid eye forever clear."

The verses were seen by no one except a brother, who died in his first youth, till about twenty years after, when he sent them to Alice on an occasion on which he thought they might be of use to her: and so they were.

Chapter XVI.

DEGREE OF D.C.L. CONFERRED AT OXFORD.—ACADEMICAL FESTIVITIES.—DIVERS FORMS OF PLEASURE.—IDLENESS IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND THE RECREATIONS OF MR. HAMMOND.—LORD PALMERSTON AND PROFESSOR WHEATSTONE.

Anno. Dom. 1862. Anno Æt. 62.

In July, 1862, at the annual "Commemoration" at Oxford, I was to be honored by that university with the degree of D.C.L., and I went my way thither. On the 5th July I gave an account of the ceremony in a letter to Lord Monteagle: "I found my part very easy to sustain, being nothing but walking upright and standing still; and I hope the undergraduates found no difficulty in theirs, being nothing but that of 'Bottom' in the interlude." The undergraduates on these occasions filled the galleries, and enjoyed at this time an exemption for an hour or two in the year (of which I am sorry to hear they are now to be deprived) from the rigors of academical decorum. They were licensed, or at least not forbidden, to indulge in every sort of uproar, cheering with all their might and flinging their jokes in the face of the solemnities. I was told that when the Duke of Wellington was one of the persons who received the honor, an undergraduate in the gallery shouted: "Three cheers for Dr. Wellington;" and the gallant doctor was vociferously cheered accordingly.

Of Oxford I had known no more than what was to be seen in a visit of a week, paid thirty years before to Ed-

ward Villiers when he was a fellow of Merton. Of Cambridge I had seen still less; but I had seen it on the same sort of occasion, also long before, in its holiday attire—not on any doctoring errand of my own, but merely on an invitation to dinner from the Master and Fellows of Trinity. I had not found any such fault with the dinner as Dr. Johnson did when he stalked off with Boswell from a dinner at one of the colleges, growling—"This merriment among parsons is mighty offensive." The fault I found was of an opposite kind; I could have wished the parsons a little more merry than they were. The post-prandial speeches were profoundly grave, as well as immeasurably long; and the only pleasure I had enjoyed was when, on looking up towards the ceiling, I saw the light fall upon a bright face of one of the Ladies Elliot, as she was looking on the scene below from some opening through which ladies were permitted to gaze at the dinners they might not eat. The gravities of the dinner, however, tedious though they were, seemed to me more suitable to the place than the gayeties of the two following days—a contravention in my eyes of a maxim which I had often maintained in regard to literature, and which I conceived to be not less applicable to enjoyments in life—that what is meant to be light should be short. I had no reason to complain, whether at Cambridge formerly or at Oxford now, being free to depart whenever I had had enough. But I saw it out, and then in a letter betook myself to moralizing: "The mistake in these cases seems to me to be in making festivity last more than one day. Human nature is not equal to more than one day's hard pleasuring at a time." And then, turning from Oxford to Bournemouth with an invidious comparison, "I wish you could see this place; it is a place where Nature is the holiday-maker and Man is at rest."

Such were *my* views of pleasure. But of pleasure the views taken in this world are very various, and every man must be allowed to have his own. In some years long past —I forget the date—when Charles Spring Rice, returning from abroad, repaired to the foreign office (to which he belonged), and asked for Mr. Hammond, the under secretary, the answer of the office-keeper was that he was not there. Charles, somewhat surprised, for Mr. Hammond was rarely known to be anywhere else, inquired what had become of him. "Well, sir," said the office-keeper, "he has gone to a funeral; and it is the only day's pleasuring he has had for two years."

The office-keeper was a little astray in speaking thus of an actual funeral and an under secretary, but if the question had been of a poet and a funeral of the fancy, or even of Youth indulging its imagination, there would be no mistake in speaking of pleasure in communion with gloom:

> "In youth we love the darksome lawn
> Brushed by the owlet's wing;
> Then twilight is preferred to dawn
> And autumn to the spring:
> Sad fancies do we then affect
> In luxury of disrespect
> To our own prodigal excess
> Of too familiar happiness."

I was young myself, though certainly not too familiar with happiness, when I frowned upon the festivities at Cambridge. At Oxford I was old, and I was also observant; and I saw a good deal that might be observed with interest in the peculiar social scenery which human life presents in this sort of assemblage; the meeting and intermingling of the men of learning and the men in public life, of the brilliant and the grave, of Euphranea and Or-

gilus,* of the divine and the man of pleasure, of the man of the world and the man of science.

The encounter which amused me most occurred at an evening party at the vice-chancellor's. Lord Palmerston was one of the eminent men who had received his degree in the morning; and, standing at a little distance, I watched him as he listened to a somewhat prolonged exposition by Professor Wheatstone of certain new devices he had been busied with for the application of telegraphy. The man of science was slow, the man of the world *seemed* attentive; the man of science was copious, the man of the world let nothing escape him; the man of science unfolded the anticipated results—another and another, the man of the world listened with all his ears: and I was saying to myself, "His patience is exemplary, but will it last forever?" when I heard the issue: "God bless my soul, you don't say so! I *must* get you to tell that to the lord chancellor." And the man of the world took the man of science to another part of the room, hooked him on to Lord Westbury, and bounded away like a horse let loose in a pasture.

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* "Euph. Are you a scholar, friend?
Org. I am, gay creature."—Ford's "*Broken Heart.*"

Chapter XVII.

QUESTIONS OF HOME POLICY IN LETTER TO LORD GREY.—LETTER TO MR. HERMAN MERIVALE.—QUESTIONS OF COLONIAL POLICY IN LETTERS TO THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE AND OTHERS.

Anno Dom. 1864–65. Anno Æt. 64–65.

Of the official operations which were now to be no longer interwoven with the poetical there remained about ten years, for I did not quit the colonial office till 1872. Those were years in which, fortunately for the colonies, colonial policy was not much entangled with home policy, and in a practical way I had as little concern as usual with English political life. But in this country a man can scarcely avoid having opinions on the fundamental questions with which the political mind of the country is from time to time possessed; and, little as he may be occupied with them, he will have occasion now and then to express them.

My opinions on parliamentary reform were expressed in a letter of 16th May, 1864, to Lord Grey, who had sent me some chapters relating to the subject in a work he was about to publish. It was a long letter, examining in detail sundry devices by which Lord Grey was of opinion that a demand for further reforms, whenever it should arise, might be best met. I confine what I shall extract to the general principles by which I was myself disposed to be guided in considering questions of organic change.

"As to my own views, I have a good deal to say if I

knew how to say it. In regard to the present state of things, I agree with you generally; but I take exception to your treatment of the franchise as a question of justice, fairness, and impartiality in respect of those who do and those who do not possess it. I think it should be regarded, not as a valuable possession, but rather as an unpaid office or function in the state, which the law assigns to be held by those who are presumably qualified to discharge it, and *because* they are qualified, and not on the ground of any other right or title. I am content with the existing and somewhat haphazard distribution, simply on the ground that it answers its purpose of producing a House of Commons which is in the main not partial nor corrupt, nor prone to be carried away by passion; but, on the contrary, if not very brilliant or enlightened, well-meaning, diligent, and fairly discreet. I am content with the borough constituencies, because I do not think that there is any deep or essential immorality in the means by which they are induced to give their votes. Bribery is a statutable offence, but not an offence against natural morality. It is, of course, more or less immoral to break the law; but I think the law against bribery cannot carry popular moral feeling along with it. Men whom a moral humility would teach that they have no possible right to form opinions upon questions of national policy and legislation, are asked to vote for this or that candidate, and, in the absence of any public motive for voting one way or the other, they vote for the candidate from whom they or their families have experienced kindness or liberality, or perhaps they see no great harm in taking five pounds for performing the perfectly innocuous act of voting for one candidate, who, for aught they can tell, is just as good as another. The statutable morality against which they offend finds little or no support in the feelings of mankind.

To this view of electioneering bribery I was first led, I think, by some remarks of yours, in your former publication, though your remarks did not go the length that they have led me to go. The only good reason I should recognize for making changes is that which you advance yourself as one main motive for projecting them—that before long they may not be to be helped.

"The only great danger which I apprehend for the country is from the natural principle of self-increase in popular power and its tendency to become irresistibly preponderant. It is difficult in these times to imagine any danger to arise to popular liberty, or to that popular power which is often miscalled popular liberty, from anything except its own excess. Nothing would have reconciled me—nothing, I believe, would have reconciled the majority of those who voted for it—to the Reform Bill of 1832, except the conjecture that of dangerous courses it was perhaps the least dangerous.

"I was slow to admit that it could be so, or I admitted it with great doubt and distrust, in 1832; but if I could have known that the Reform Bill would give birth to thirty-two years of domestic tranquillity, I should have been quite content with it, and prepared to hazard all that might ensue thereafter. The Reform Bill of 1832, and any other henceforth to be enacted, may be the forerunners of a great storm and a great wreck, and yet they may not the less be regarded by those who may look back upon them one hundred years hence as having postponed the inevitable. Our business now is the same, in one point at least, as that of the reformers of 1832—to provide what stability and security we can for such limited tract of time as it seems likely that our operations can cover. Our views must be bounded by our horizon, and the paulo-post-future is what it belongs to us to take

care of. Thus I am prepared to apply the same principles of judgment to your project of reform as I applied or ought to have applied to that of 1832. Whenever some such project shall appear to be the least of two or more dangers, I shall be ready for its *practical* consideration; and, foreseeing with you the possibility that it may become so in no long course of years, I am ready now for its *theoretic* consideration.

"What puts on the brake more than anything else is, no doubt, the frightful phenomenon of the United States exploding. Cameron pointed out to me a passage in a letter from Southey to the Rev. J. Miller, dated 16th November, 1833 ('Southey's Life and Correspondence,' vol. vi., p. 223), which might make an interesting foot-note to the page in which you refer to the United States. He is speaking of the changes which take place in revolutionary times, and he says, 'Some of these changes are likely to act in our favor. The time cannot be far distant when the United States of America, instead of being held up to us as an example, will be looked to as a warning.' The warning is now before us, and its full import is recognized. For what length of years it may suffice, or by what other warnings from Hungary, or Poland, or South Italy, or Germany, or France, or other countries, it may be followed, no man can tell, or how soon all warnings may cease to be heeded. In the meantime, at leisure and in a season of no internal disturbance, I think with you and with John Mill, it is well that philosophers and statesmen should meditate principles and projects.

"I agree as to the danger of reform by instalment. But at the same time I think it is not possible that any man should construct before the time, with any chance of its ultimate adoption, a project of which the parts are essentially correlative and one to balance another so as to

form a compacted and organic whole. You seem to recognize this impossibility, and you disavow the purpose of propounding a scheme in detail. But your views seem to me to constitute a scheme in so far forth as, among the several changes you propose, the admissibility of one depends, in your apprehension, upon the simultaneous adoption of another. I do not object to this; for I think it useful and indeed important that such a scheme should be devised; it presents a thesis for discussion, and contributes to a more just appreciation of its own elements taken separately; and in the vast jumble of public opinion it forms a solid nucleus to which just thoughts may gather and attach themselves. But if any composite scheme of reform should ever again have a chance of being carried into effect, I think, and I dare say you also think, that it will be one, not preconcerted, but shaped by the immediate pressures of the time which requires it.

"My own impression is that, whenever the time shall come, reform will be effected in the more dangerous way, by a simple and not by a composite measure; and that it will be effected by a measure which shall consist of little else than an addition, be it more or less at a time, to the popular element: for it will only come by popular pressure; and the motive of that pressure will be popular love of power simply, and not, as in 1832, that love of power combined with a sense, pervading many classes, of practical evils resulting from an unjust and corrupt House of Commons. And if popular love of power be the sole and simple motive at work (sanctioned as it is, almost universally, though, I think, most fallaciously, by the notion that love of power for its own sake is a lawful appetite), I should infer that the simple and direct pressure for that object could not be successfully met by any measure which should throw in counterweights tending to neutral-

ize or defeat it, or even to qualify it in a balancing sense. When the pressure shall be strong enough to produce a measure at all, it will probably be strong enough to throw out all counterweights. The principle in question will not be that of constituting a better House of Commons, because there will be no strong party in the country that finds any particular fault with the working of the House as it exists. The only principle maintained by any strong party will be that of giving more power to the people, not because it will do them any good, but because they must and will have it, or because they are supposed to have a right to it; and anything which comes in material abatement of that principle will be denounced by the people and the flatterers of the people as a fraud upon the principle and a derogation from the people's rights. It will be said that you pretend to admit the principle and the right, and then you evade giving real effect to them.

"But, supposing that there are parties in the country who would think, as I do, that an accession of popular power is merely an unhappy necessity, and supposing that these parties may have power enough in the country to effect a compromise as such, there will still be the difficulty, in a state of society like ours, in which every man will have his own opinion and try to have his own way, of bringing these anti-popular parties to a concurrence as to the particular counterweights to be selected."

Then came the examination of Lord Grey's devices, ten in number, which, as they could only be reproduced in a one-sided way, it is better to omit, and I pass to the conclusion.

"I have now adverted, I think, to each of your principal topics of suggested reform; and, if to any purpose at all, in a manner, I am afraid, to be more of a hinderance than a help. But herein is the great difficulty—that in a

subject which admits of so many views and doubts, and of the more the more it is considered, it is hard for any two men to agree, and more hard to agree upon what will meet the concurrence of hundreds or millions of other men. My inference is, that agreement being so hopeless as the result of *close* consideration, what will be practically at issue are those elements of the question which can be dealt with on *loose* consideration; or if on close consideration, on close consideration of that which is least complex; a simple reduction of the franchise, identifying borough and county franchises, a redistribution of the constituencies, chiefly by contraction or dilatation of those which exist on a maximum and minimum principle, and cumulative voting.

"These measures would be within the constitution. They would introduce no new principle into it. But, with the exception of the cumulative vote, they would be in the popular direction.

"You have touched upon the educational test, but in that I think there is no safety to be found. A high educational test, such as that of universities and learned professions, would give good constituencies; but a low one would give, in my opinion, political activity and excitement without political prudence. With a view to take securities for political prudence, if something else than property were to be set up as a safeguard, I should prefer age to education.

"If we should unfortunately be driven upon lowering the franchise by instalment, or in a moderate measure proposing itself as final, without counterweights or safeguards, may there not be found even in this, if well regulated, some principle of conservation? for the self-importance of constituencies depends upon their limitation; and if they be numerous enough, and not too numerous, may

they not be strong enough in the strength of numbers to hold out against being swamped by multitudes?"

On the question of bribery, as treated by me, I find a few wise words in a letter from Mr. James Marshall, in November, 1867: "I should not blame your poor voter, who took a £5 note, severely. No; I would simply take away his vote. He might sell his birthright once over, but not go on playing Esau all his life if I could help it. I would punish rich men more severely, and the briber more than the bribee."

And in that year a few words passed between me and Lord Grey on the subject of his speech on reform: "I read it in the *Times* with more satisfaction than any speech of the session on that subject, and my feeling is the same on reading it again in this copy. The embarrassment which everybody feels as to what is to be done arises, I suppose, from the fact that what is to be done is to please the people and not to serve them. There is a necessity to please them, or to try to please them, but the object is in itself so ill-defined, and the amount of risk to be run for the object so difficult to estimate, that all the thoughtful portion of the world is in a state of perplexity. Your glance at the former popularity of protection in this country and its present popularity in countries democratically governed, will in time, I believe, receive some illustration from the trades unions. I understand that the feelings of these bodies is decidedly protectionist; and though many of them are not disposed to take a part in general politics at present, it is obvious that no such bodies can exist without being convertible to political purposes under given circumstances. And their means and powers are formidable. Edmund Head, who is on the commission for inquiring into them, tells me that one of them, 'The Associated Engineers,' has a revenue of £86,000 a year."

He replied as follows: "I am very glad you approve of my speech on reform. The difficulty of the question no doubt arises very much from the cause you mention, together with the fact that in the House of Commons it is always considered far more with reference to personal and party interests than to the interests of the public. For instance, I understand that the real obstacle to carrying the cumulative vote is, not that opinion is unfavorable to its fairness, but that whenever two men of the same politics sit for one place, where there has been or might be a contest, they both feel that one or other of them would be pretty sure to be turned out if this mode of voting were adopted. There are nearly one hundred and sixty members of the House of Commons in this situation, who are hostile to the scheme because it would endanger their seats. I am persuaded that if the bill should pass in the shape which now seems probable, the power of the trades unions will soon make itself most seriously felt in Parliament, and I believe with you their spirit is decidedly protectionist. This might probably be first shown by the revival of the old system of close corporations of all the skilled artisans. The command of an income of £86,000 a year by the council of a trades union implies the possession of very dangerous power."

If, in 1864, I adverted to "the frightful phenomenon of the United States exploding," as a then present warning to England, I did not look back upon it, when past, as no longer a warning. In February, 1870, Herman Merivale having sent me a very instructive and thoughtful article in a magazine, written on his return from a visit of observation to the United States, I wrote to him in reply: "Your accounts of the United States have given me great pleasure. They are very vivid and interesting, and they present some insights and views which are new to me. I

do not like the American people or any other people. But it is the loud and obtrusive portion of the people, heard of in public and in the press, which is the more disagreeable portion; and I can quite believe that, on getting within this array of drums and trumpets and stars and stripes, one would find a good deal to like; and perhaps, as one got farther and farther into it, patriotic boasting and bullying would die away in the distance. The English people are a disagreeable people enough, but I think they indulge rather less in these patriotic pretensions.

"I am not quite sure that I agree with you in your preference of the organization constructed to the organization constructively evolved—nor that I should expect as much stability for the former as for the latter. The American polity was very wisely constructed, no doubt, or it could not have lasted so long as it did without disruption; but when Americans speak of the issue of the war between North and South as evincing strength of structure in the Union, I feel disposed to ask whether the war itself was not some evidence of its weakness, whether the Union was worth preserving at the cost of the war, and whether in reality the Union is the Union that was before the war, or is not essentially and substantially another Union, and whether the exultation of the North in making the Union whole again is not something analogous to the exultation of the French physician over the body of his patient—'il est mort guéri'?

"The real triumph of the war was in the extinction of slavery, which was *not* the object of it. If there was no hope that slavery could be extinguished as we extinguished it in our colonies, or otherwise than by force, it may be well to have had it extinguished even at the cost of that monstrous and horrible war, with all the demoralization and evil passions it has left behind it. That was not the

justification of the North, because it was not their object; it was the object of only a small minority; and, this being so, there is no assurance that, with an equal absence of any such object or justification, another war may not be at any time undertaken by any majority of the nation, exercising tyrannical power over a minority for national aggrandizement in the maintenance of a coerced federation. If the construction of the Union be such as to maintain itself by these means and on these terms, I cannot call it a successful construction in respect of the interests of freedom and of humanity.

"But I doubt the coherency of the structure, especially having regard to the national lust of aggrandizement. The South is now a rotten member. Let Mexico and Canada be annexed, and Cuba and Hayti, with such other of the neighboring islands as would naturally go along with them, and what would be the result? Would it not happen to the Union (as taught in the 'Discorsi') 'come a quello albero che havesse più grosso il ramo che 'l piede, che sostenendolo con fattica, ogni piccolo vento lo fiacca'? or, as Bacon expresses the same idea, 'when they did spread and their boughs were become too great for their stem, they became a windfall on the sudden.'

"Such are my notions; but, on political questions, I feel my opinions to be nothing more than conjectures."

Mr. Merivale made answer (11th February, 1870): "Many thanks for your commentary. Notwithstanding my American partialities—which I fully admit—I cannot gainsay much of what you have said as to the risky condition of their political speculation. Only on one point I must differ, if I understand you rightly, as it is matter of history, and not conjecture. No doubt the extinction of slavery was not the 'object' of the Civil War, in the sense of being the deliberate purpose of those who op-

posed secession, any more than cutting off Charles the First's head was the object of the leaders of the Long Parliament. But the slavery question was at the bottom of the whole quarrel notwithstanding. Increase of the area of slavery and maintenance of the fugitive slave-laws were the two incidents of that question on which the first issues were taken. A number of well-meaning people, members of Congress from both sides, met, just before the Fort Sumter business, to try and arrange terms of reconciliation. They got no further than to formulate points of difference. Those points—fourteen or fifteen in number—were *all*, unless my memory much deceives me, connected with slavery. There was no other ground of difference."

Early in this year Sir Charles Elliot had sent me a paper upon colonial defences for communication to the Duke of Newcastle, then secretary of state, if I should think it proper to be so communicated. In sending it to the duke (26th February, 1864), I expressed my own views on some of the questions raised: "As to our American possessions, I have long held and often expressed the opinion that they are a sort of *damnosa hæreditas;* and when your grace and the Prince of Wales were employing yourselves so successfully in conciliating the colonists, I thought that you were drawing closer ties which might better be slackened if there were any chance of their slipping away altogether. I think that a policy which has regard to a not very far-off future should prepare facilities and propensities for separation; and I therefore agree entirely in Sir Charles Elliot's preference of a local and indigenous military force. So long as there shall be a single imperial battalion in the provinces the whole imperial army and exchequer, and the honor of the crown, will be committed to its support under difficulties; and circumstances may arise in which a

large proportion of the imperial army and treasure will not be more than enough. This is what I fear. As to the current expenses of garrisons during peace, it is comparatively unimportant, as a mere matter of finance, what portion of them shall be borne by the provinces and this country respectively; but, viewed as a part of a system and an implied pledge, the future contingencies involved seem to me most formidable. In my estimation, the worst consequence of the late dispute with the United States has been that of involving this country and its North American provinces in closer relations and a common cause.

"I should desire to throw the current military expenditure upon the colonists, as tending, by connecting self-protection with self-government, to detach the colonies, and promote their independence and segregation at an earlier day, and thereby to withdraw this country in time from great contingent dangers. If there be any motives which should plead for a prolonged connection, it appears to me that they are of a cosmopolitan and philanthropic nature, and not such as grow out of the interests of this country, though there are no doubt some minor English interests which are the better for the connection. There are national obligations, also, to be regarded, and some self-sacrifice is required of this country for a time. All that I would advocate is a preparatory policy, loosening obligations, and treating the repudiation by the colonists of legislative and executive dependence as naturally carrying with it some modification of the absolute right to be protected. As to *prestige*, I think it belongs to real power, and not to a merely apparent dominion by which real power is impaired. With regard to the Cape, which has been hitherto the extreme case of military expenditure for the protection of a colony, I think the question should be regarded as purely philanthropic—a question

whether this country thinks it her duty to save and civilize barbarous tribes, whatever be the cost, or is prepared to let loose upon them the barbarous passions of civilized men. If the former, warfare must be conducted at the Cape by British troops under British control, and at the cost of the British treasury. If the latter, it is essential to this country's good name that irresponsibility should be established by separation."

In the following year the government applied to the House of Commons for contributions towards the future defence of Canada, and I wrote (25th March, 1865) to Mr. Fortescue,* under secretary of state, whose business it had been to support this application, what had occurred to me on reading the debate: "There is one point which has not been touched by your opponents, nor do I know whether it has been considered by yourselves. The case being professedly one for joint charges, is the political position such as to enable the two parties to contract mutual obligations of adequate validity and duration? In respect of some moderate amount of military expenditure for a year or two to come, both the British and Canadian legislatures are competent to charge the respective revenues with the respective quotas. But if this present and presently-to-come expenditure proceeds upon any principle at all, the principle is one which extends to contingencies and considerations far beyond what any one House of Commons and any one Canadian Assembly is competent to deal with. It may be said, perhaps, that the same objection would apply to an offensive and defensive alliance between two independent countries governed by bodies periodically changed (of which bodies no one for the time being can bind its successor). But to this I should reply

* Now Lord Carlingford.

that an offensive and defensive alliance between two countries, of which one or both are democracies, is in all probability an unsustainable alliance, and ought never to be contracted. You may rely upon charges and appropriations actually enacted by British North American legislatures, but you can by no means carry your reliance farther. Beyond this point all that you have to rely upon is the pressure of a mutual interest; and, for my part, I look about for such an interest in vain. The North American, like the Australian colonies, and like the Cape, have very naturally renounced all consideration of English interests, and renounced and resented every exercise of English power, so often as they conflicted in the slightest degree with colonial interests or sentiments. If (notwithstanding the Irish element in their populations) they have any *sentiment* of attachment to England (which I doubt), it is one which is ready to be converted into actual animosity on the slightest conflict of interests or interference with independent action. So long as the connection is an unequal one—all give and no take—and they enjoy real independence, with all the advantages pertaining to dependence, they are content; but no longer.* Now it is not in the nature of things that, where there is not really and substantially a common interest, two countries connected by little else than origin, and widely disconnected by situation and circumstances, should contract with each other

* *Note*, Feb. 1885.—In the very week in which this chapter is passing through the press, the Canadian and Australasian colonies have taken steps which are at direct variance with the views I have expressed, whether as to facts or as to forecasts. They have offered to contribute, at their own cost, contingents of colonial troops to our forces at war in the Soudan. It was not without reason that I concluded my letter to Mr. Merivale with the acknowledgment that on political questions my opinions are nothing more than conjectures.

an alliance offensive and defensive, which shall have the elements of stability under pressure. I suppose the government had no alternative but to throw away a few hundred thousands on fortifications till time and circumstance shall shape their course; but I hope the colonists will be given to understand that it is not within the competency of one government and one House of Commons to bind the country to a principle and a permanent course of policy, any more than it is competent to a British North American legislature to offer a correlative pledge."

And shortly after I wrote to Sir F. Elliot in the same sense, contending against pledges, and adding: "I think, also, we should not take any practical step which might, unless accompanied by an intimation to the contrary, be construed into an understanding on the subject which it might be disreputable hereafter to depart from. The tendency of the debates in the House of Commons since Lowe's speech seems to be so strongly and so generally in the right direction that I should think the government can have no difficulty in keeping out of such an understanding. I suppose that the £50,000 was in reality the straw thrown up, and that it is clear to them now which way the wind blows. You and I, who have some thirty or forty years' knowledge of colonial legislatures, can judge, as well perhaps as better politicians, what would be to be expected from an attempt at co-operation between this country and those provinces in giving effect, not to specific engagements embodied in legislative acts, but to principles and understandings. If 'put not your trust in princes' be a salutary admonition, much more 'put not your trust in peoples.'

"As to annexation, so far as this country is concerned, I think no difficulties whatever should be thrown in the

way of it. But I imagine that nothing short of force or terror would bring the British provinces to consent to such an annexation as would devolve on them a share of the wars and war-debts of the United States. I should not look, therefore, to such an annexation or 'accession' of Canada as was contemplated in the 11th of the Articles of Confederation of 1st March, 1781, with the liabilities accruing under the 3d and 8th of the same articles—nor should I contemplate an annexation under the Articles of the Constitution of 1787, without a material modification of article 1, section 8, which empowers Congress to pay the debts of the United States, and to impose taxes for the purpose, and to borrow money, and to raise and support armies at the cost of all the states. But I can conceive that some annexation or accession might be negotiated, establishing some specific federal relation of a less incorporating character, to the contentment of the Canadians, if that would satisfy the ambition of the United States. Whether such a negotiation should be undertaken seems to me to be for the consideration of the Canadians; and, if undertaken, I think it should be concluded by them with our sanction, and not by us. I think it may be doubted whether this or any other addition to the states of the Union would add to its power as a nation. As to our maritime provinces, they seem to be generally regarded as standing upon a different footing from Canada, and involving imperial interests more directly; and Halifax is spoken of as a great naval stronghold and depot or base of operations. But is it not a fact that the importance of a naval station and predominance in those seas arises chiefly out of our territorial possessions thereabouts? If we had nothing to protect and nothing to quarrel about in those parts, might not our navy be content with Bermuda? There are the fisheries; but in

concert with France I think an arrangement might be devised which would make it the interest of the United States not to quarrel about them."

Sir F. Rogers looked at the question from another, though not an opposite, point of view: "I go very far with you in the desire to shake off all responsibly governed colonies; and as to North America, I think if we abandon one we had better abandon all. I should wholly abhor being left with a pitiful remnant on my hands—say Prince Edward Island or Newfoundland. I also go with you in hating the talk about *prestige*. But I think our present relation to Canada involves an understanding that we are not to let other people take them from us unless they like to go. And I am inclined to think that allowing them to be taken from us for fear of consequences to ourselves in the way of war and taxation would be one of those ungenerous, chicken-hearted proceedings which, somehow or other, bring their own punishment in the long run, and indicate the declining spirit of a nation. There is something beyond philosophy, or at least my philosophy, in such doings. I cannot justify Bruce for giving battle on disadvantageous ground rather than abandon a woman in labor; yet I not only honor him for it, but feel that, if he had not been the man to do that, he would not have been the man to win all that he did win. So of Canada: nothing can be more provoking than to be obliged (if we are obliged) to fight the United States in the place and manner which is most disadvantageous to ourselves, for a colony which is no good to us and has no real care for us. Yet, somehow, I would not wish England to refrain from doing so; for England would not be great, courageous, successful England if she did. I am not sure that this is inconsistent with your letters. Indeed, I understand you as wishing, not that we should re-

pudiate the obligation, but that we should let it wear out, and help it, as occasion may offer, to do so."

I find in this year of 1865 two or three letters on minor points of colonial policy which may have some claim to the little room they will occupy. I had taken an active part in advocating a measure for pensioning colonial governors on their retirement; and the measure devised in the colonial office had been, in my opinion, a good one: but it had lost its character on its way through the treasury. I wrote about it to Sir F. Rogers (18th May, 1865): "The governors' pension bill disappoints me much. It is true that it will make adequate provision for the officers to be benefited by it. But I never made much account of the plea of justice to the officers. They knew the conditions and accepted the service. What seemed to me worth considering was the public interests. The bill will not, as we had hoped, help us in weeding the service; but on the contrary, as you say, it will materially hinder us. In all cases in which the secretary of state has been or shall be betrayed into appointing an unfit man (and it is a service in which fitness cannot be known without trial), he will be almost constrained to continue him in employment till he shall have earned a pension; and this will not be till he is sixty years of age. And, as you observe, the bill will not aid the transference of the best men in the permanent colonial service to an administrative career; since, under section 11, their permanent colonial service will not count towards a governor's pension. It may be that a better field of candidates will be opened at home than we have had heretofore; but the permanent colonial service would always be a most important field; and in the last twenty years it has given us most of our first-rate governors—Stephenson, Walker, Wodehouse among them. As to the six years' tenure, I am disposed to think that it

would be better on the whole to adhere to the rule rather strictly. Where personal interests are so much concerned, it is difficult to maintain a rule in some cases and relax it in others. But *if* relaxations were to be admitted, I believe it would be better to grant a second six years' term than to grant indefinite prolongations. I believe a governor loses much of the influence required for successful administration as he approaches the end of his term; and when he is allowed to hang on in uncertainty he does not regain it. He is supported with a flagging zeal by his adherents, and opposed by adverse parties with a more unbridled hostility, 'semper atrociore erga dominantium exitus.'"*

The fact noticed in this letter, that for twenty years past some of our best colonial governors had been obtained by transference from the permanent civil service of the colonies, is to be credited to the operation of the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832. A governor's tenure of office, both before that act and since, was limited to six years. Before the reform of Parliament the pressure brought to bear upon the secretary of state by the owners of rotten boroughs constrained him not seldom to send out unfit men from England. After the reform bill this pressure ceased; and appointments were made, not, indeed—or very rarely—of born colonists, but of Englishmen employed and tested in the more arduous and important colonial offices below that of governors. There was at one time a notion abroad that born colonists themselves should be chosen, and this led to a word of caution from me in a letter of February, 1865:

"It may be as well to take this opportunity of saying that I believe it to be a mistake to suppose that people of

* Tac. "Ann.," 4, xi.

color like to be governed by a person of color, or that colonists like to be governed by a colonist. On the contrary, there is a natural disposition in a colony to prefer what is less familiar as that to which they are to look up; "essendo vizio comune degli uomini volere piùtosto servire agli strani che cedere a suoi medesimi," as was observed by Guicciardini long ago. The appointment which is most acceptable in a colony, generally speaking, is of an aristocratic personage, if he can be had; if not, a metropolitan person. Now and then, when a creole or a born colonist is so pre-eminent and so popular as to be a sort of representative of his class, his appointment to the highest offices may be popular; but this rarely happens, and it can scarcely happen at all except in a large and important community. I do not mention these things as any reason why native colonists, who may be found to deserve advancement to the highest offices, should not be advanced; but rather as a *caveat*, lest it be supposed that in such cases defect of desert would be made good by popularity."

Chapter XVIII.

MARRIAGES AND DEATHS.

Anno Dom. 1858–68. Anno Æt. 58–68.

The years of which I am writing were, in more kinds than one, years of deprivation. Most of my girl friends were going away from me in marriage:

"Con altri fanciulletti
Ivano essercitando
Gli scherzi puerili;
Ma con loro giocando
Fieramente scherzava
Un fanciul cieco e nudo." *

Mary Spring Rice was married to Edward O'Brien, Lucy Spring Rice to Octavius Knox, Theresa Villiers to Charles Earle, Elizabeth Villiers to Henry Loch, Edith Villiers to Robert Lytton, Arabella Prescott to Richard Decie, and Julia Cameron to Charles Norman. They had all been dear and delightful to me as children, and our friendship had grown with their growth. I had my compensations, however; for while these were passing from girlhood into married life, the two elder of my daughters were passing, or about to pass, from childhood into girlhood; and whether as children or as girls my own three were the abiding indemnity for every loss.

The first of the seven marriages, that of Mary Spring Rice, took place on the 7th September, 1863. The beauty

* "Sampogna di Marino."

that was then given in marriage, and the joy that went with it, were of a high order and a rare excellence; but they were a joy and beauty destined to a few years of precarious existence and an early end. They were:

> "Beauty that must die,
> And Joy whose hand is ever at his lips
> Bidding adieu." *

Mary's health, which had not been strong before, gave way in a year or two, and she died in 1868. I have wished and tried to leave some record of her, as I did of Edward Villiers long ago; for they were equal, though not alike, in the charm and radiance which each of them threw across a portion of my life. But the weakness of spirits belonging to old age disables me.

Early in the year 1865 she had lost her father, a man of more than ordinary talents, high cultivation, and an ardent and affectionate nature; and there had been other deaths among our friends and connections when I wrote to her in September: "In these evil days I have often turned my thoughts to you for my comfort and consolation, and all that I could get of that kind was not more than I stood in need of; but when Theo told me that there were some plans for your coming next spring and bringing her with you, I was not in a sanguine mood, and I did not count upon it much; and next spring seemed too far, and death flying about too near, to make it much worth while to look forward; so I am not greatly disappointed at hearing that you are to dispose of yourself in other ways. No doubt a visit from you or Theo would light up these evening hours of mine, cloud and rain notwithstanding, and notwithstanding the clouds that return after the rain; but if I am not to see you or her again except in

* Keats.

such fugitive visits as yours were in the spring, I have still one satisfaction—that nothing you could bring me for the future in the way of sunset colors could be what I should more love to look back upon than the past; and it may be as well to rest in recollections and through them to

'gaze forever
On that green light that lingers in the west.'" *

In December, 1867, Mary's death was approaching, and I spoke of its approach in a letter to Lady Taunton: "She writes gayly that she is a little stronger since she reached Mentone, and can walk a little, and does not feel 'quite so much as if she might fall into the first grave she came to without asking whom it is for;' but the hopes of her recovery are less and less continually, and I must expect to lose shortly the dearest and most affectionate friend I have in that generation." The ardor of her affection for those she was leaving was with her to the last; and not this only; for, feminine as her nature was in every fibre of it, she had fervent feelings seldom to be met with in women, at least in women with such steady strength of understanding as she possessed, concerning public interests, especially those connected with Ireland; and this strength and these ardors also remained with her while life remained. When Alice spoke of her love of her country, so strong in death, to Lord Russell (of whom, while much is known to the world, much also is unknown) the aged statesman could not listen to the relation without tears.

A bust of Mary was executed in marble by an eminent artist, Mr. Munro. It accomplished, perhaps, all that sculpture could accomplish, and the effect is fine in its way; but her face was a fitter subject for a painter than a sculptor; there was a richness and variety of transitional

* Coleridge, "Ode to Dejection."

expressions which neither art could render, but of which the one might have afforded a better indication or suggestion than the other. My painter in "St. Clement's Eve" has said that a portrait should be pregnant with many expressions and delivered of one. It is by such a portrait only that Mary's face could be even approximately represented. Her sister having written to tell me that the bust was on its way, I wrote in reply: "I doubt whether any representation of Mary will come right to me. I have no pleasure certainly in the photographs; nor should I like anything which would disturb or perplex the image of her in my mind and memory. In my estimation her beauty was at its highest point during the first two months at Bournemouth last summer. Once during that time I saw in her face for a few moments a rapt and absorbed expression which was more divinely beautiful than I have ever seen in any face except once for a few moments in one other. That other was one* whose face *you* never saw till altered by time and sufferings."

A few verses by one of Mary's younger friends in my family may find themselves in accord with the time and occasion:

"A severed thread, a broken life,
But little at the best;
Peace from the turmoil and the strife,
A little earlier rest;

"A little longer, closer kiss,
A tenderer adieu,
A little aching when we miss
The loving face we knew;

"And then another broken thread,
And other hearts made sad;
Another meeting overhead,
Two souls forever glad."

* Miss Fenwick's.

If there was any one of my girl friendships out of our families to be compared in its ardor and intimacy with that which was thus brought to an end, it was my friendship with Julia Cameron. She was married in 1859. This marriage also was one of the happiest that I have known until her health broke down; and this, like the other, was followed, though at a much longer interval, by an almost youthful death.

There has not fallen under my observation any nature and character which was so singular as hers, or so inconceivable by those who have not seen and known it. There is a charm in what is called originality which every one can understand. An entire simplicity, an unconscious honesty of mind, so founded in nature that no principle could be needed to guard or support it, strength of understanding and clearness of purpose, with a composure small disturbances could never ruffle, a liveliness of the inner mind which was recognized the more the less it sought recognition; these, or some of these, in one or another combination, are to be met with, if not often, yet not so rarely but that every one may have examples within his experience. But in Julia Cameron they did not appear in any likeness that was to be met with elsewhere. And when I try to make out what it was that distinguished her from other natural and original persons, I can think of nothing capable of being written down except this, that having been born of parents who were no more ordinary in their ways than in their gifts and faculties and powers, there occurred, in the case of the daughter, that sort of resilience which is so often observed that it may almost be regarded as a provision of nature, and her originality took, along with other forms, the form of a determination to be commonplace. Commonplace otherwise than externally she never could be, let her determination be what it

might; but I think the intention to be like other people in all things possible gave a peculiar color and distinctness to the inborn individuality which no outward conformity could conceal.

This said says so little, that I am reminded of "*a Sonnet which saith that the Lost One cannot be made known to those new friends which come after*":

> "I honor thee by silence, and thy praise
> I would not undertake; yet now my heart,
> Sodden by tears, its firmness gone in part,
> At one inquiring mood, one kindly phrase,
> Rebellious at the bonds I set, will raise
> A picture of thee, futile, blurred, and faint,
> Drawn from a memory. Yet shall restraint
> Be once more paramount, that in my ways
> No strife with fate be seen. God doth erase,
> And man may not rewrite. Majestic gloom
> Descends upon what was, and in the tomb
> All record that I had to show decays,
> And this by ordinance of God. His will
> Decrees a blank nor tongue nor pen can fill."

This sonnet, from a volume of poems, few, but beautiful, by Mrs. Knox, born Spring Rice, expresses what I have felt in attempting to describe Mary O'Brien and Julia Norman, and what I feel in desisting from the attempt.*

The other marriages of that time were happy ones from the first and are so still; and though every such union brings some inevitable separations, and I had perhaps a rather strong sympathy with the parental feeling, which cannot but be a mixed one, yet I knew that I ought to rejoice in them, and I hope and believe that I did.

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* Since this was written, the volume has been published by Smith & Elder, 15 Waterloo Place, 1876.

In the years between 1865 and 1870 we lost five other relatives, only one of whom (Lord Monteagle) had entered upon old age.

Some of these losses were among the greatest events of my life, and it is for this reason that I am unable to give an account of them.

On the 18th May, 1876, I lost my eldest son.

Chapter XIX.

THE INSURRECTION OF 1865 IN JAMAICA.—MARTIAL LAW.

Anno Dom. 1865–67. Anno Æt. 65–67.

Towards the end of the year 1865 an event occurred which brought upon me during the last months of that year and the first half of 1866 an unusual pressure of official work and anxiety. This was the insurrection of the negroes in Jamaica, in October, 1865. On the 11th of that month some hundreds of them, who for some time past had been secretly formed into companies and drilled in the mountains, marched down upon St. Morant's Bay, in the parish of St. Thomas-in-the-East, at which a court of petty sessions had been sitting, and eighteen magistrates, clergymen, and others were shot and beaten and hacked to pieces, and thirty-one wounded.

Mr. Eyre, the governor, forthwith adopted the proceedings required under a Jamaica statute for proclaiming martial law. It was proclaimed as soon as these proceedings could be completed, which was on the 13th October; and it extended over the county of Surrey, with the exception of Kingston. The governor was urged to include Kingston, but refused.

Though not himself a soldier, Governor Eyre made his military dispositions with military promptitude, skill, and vigor, himself accompanying the troops; and the insurrection in the county of Surrey was brought to an end in about ten days. But there was no reason to suppose that the island was safe elsewhere. He hastened back to

Kingston, where he searched out the sources of danger, and in a few days obtained information which convinced him that a colored member of assembly named Gordon had been in league with the insurgent leaders in St. Thomas-in-the-East, and that he was also in a treasonable league with a Dr. Bruce, and with a Mr. Levien, the editor of a newspaper, at the opposite extremity of the island. On the strength of this information the governor arrested Mr. Gordon in Kingston, where martial law was not in operation, and sent him to Morant Bay, where it was, and where he was tried by court-martial, convicted, and executed.

What with existing emergencies and what with outlooks for times to come, the governor had his hands full at Kingston. He was busied, not only with alarming reports from the custodes and others in every parish of the island, and with the investigations to which they led, but also with another species of duty, and one which involved questions of paramount importance to the future welfare of the island. The assembly, hitherto so jealous of its independence and pernicious power, partook of the prevailing panic, and becoming aware that there was an element of danger in its own composition, was induced to negotiate with the governor for constitutional changes by which the authority of the crown might be increased. In the conduct of this negotiation there was no time to be lost; for with the subsidence of the panic the assembly's love and pride of power would be sure to revive.

While the governor was thus engrossed at Kingston, the officers under Brigadier-general Nelson, in the area of martial law, were employed in pursuing the insurgents and holding courts-martial on those who were charged with participation in the massacre of the 11th at Morant Bay, or with other insurrectionary crimes; and no less

than three hundred and fifty-four sentences of death were pronounced and executed. The deaths otherwise occasioned in the course of the military operations, by the soldiers and the maroons in alliance with them, made up the total lives sacrificed to four hundred and thirty-nine. Martial law was left in force for the maximum term of one month assigned by the Jamaica statute. When the news reached England two parties were formed; the one abounding in admiration of the coolness, energy, and skill by which the governor had suppressed a local and averted a general insurrection of the negroes; the other equally abounding in censure of the severities exercised in the process, and especially denouncing as unlawful and unpardonable the transference of Gordon from Kingston to Morant Bay, and his trial and execution under martial law.

A commission of inquiry was sent to Jamaica, and, after taking evidence for four months, they came to the conclusion that, though the original and immediate design for the overthrow of constituted authority was confined to a small portion of the parish of St. Thomas-in-the-East, yet the disorder in fact spread with singular rapidity over an extensive tract of country, and that, had more than a momentary success been obtained by the insurgents, their ultimate overthrow would have been attended with a still more fearful loss of life and property; and they came to the further conclusion that praise was due to Governor Eyre for his skill, promptitude, and vigor, to which the speedy termination of the insurrection was in a great measure to be attributed; and they added that martial law was continued in force too long; that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; and that other punishments had been reckless, wanton, and cruel.

As to the case of Gordon, the commissioners said it was

clear that his conduct had been such as to convince both friends and enemies that he had been a party to the insurrection; but they found no sufficient proof of it in the evidence before the court-martial; and they thought that what his conduct amounted to was adequately represented by what he had said of himself shortly before the rebellion broke out: "I have just gone as far as I can go, but no farther. I have been asked several times to head a rebellion; but there is no fear of that. I will try first a demonstration of it."

The effect of the proceedings against Gordon upon his allies in the West is exemplified by the tone of Levien's newspaper on the 17th, when the news of the massacre had reached him, contrasted with the tone on the 24th, when the arrest of Gordon was known. At the first date, he threatens the governor: "A stern lesson will have been taught him, the true meaning of which he shall learn through the columns of this journal, so soon as the full details of the bloody tragedy are at our command. It is by no means our intention to spare the rod and spoil the child . . . . What will he write to the colonial secretary as to the blood which testifies against his fatal misrule," etc. At the second date he writes: "It cannot be denied that to the master spirit of his excellency the governor—to the energy, prudence, and unhesitating action of Mr. Eyre, the island and its people owe a debt of gratitude worthy of everlasting memory. Never has a righteous execution so instantly followed execrable crime," etc.

The commissioners, in describing what had been done, for the most part left it to others to assign and portion out the responsibility for the several proceedings to the several parties concerned. But Governor Eyre, from first to last, took the generous course of shifting no responsibility which it was possible for him to share; and though

much of what was done by the military men in St. Thomas-in-the-East while he was at Kingston can have been but imperfectly known to him at the time, he disavowed nothing; and though his authority was not asked or required for the execution of Gordon, he, in common with the commander of the forces, expressly approved it.

I have related the principal facts in this insurrection, chiefly on account of certain questions of great and permanent importance which arose out of it—questions concerning the nature and incidence of martial law. The party which denounced the severities used in its suppression, and especially the execution of Gordon (called by some the *popular* party, though *I* can hardly call it so, for John Mill lost his seat for Westminster in consequence of his connection with it), caused Brigadier-general Nelson, under whose orders Gordon was executed, and Lieutenant Brand, who presided at the court-martial which tried him, to be indicted for murder; and the Lord Chief Justice of England, in a charge occupying, I think, ten hours in the delivery, professed to instruct the grand jury on the subject of martial law.

When the commissioners had been about to depart for Jamaica, I had been present at a conference between one of them and the colonial secretary of state, and I took occasion then to say that, in my opinion, the question they would have to determine was, not what was lawful, but what lawlessness was justifiable; and that opinion I retained when the charge of the lord chief justice was delivered. But that was not the opinion of the lord chief justice. What else was his opinion it was not easy to collect. Perhaps his lordship thought it desirable that to whatever decision the grand jury might come it should not be in any manifest opposition to his charge. But it appeared to me, and it appears to me still, that a charge

which was at once of such high authority and of such doubtful meaning could not be placed on record and take effect upon governors or commanders of the forces placed in critical circumstances, without involving the possibility of disaster and deep injury at one time or another to one portion or another of the dominions of the crown. And the view which I took of its tenor I expressed in a letter of the 13th June, 1867, to Lord Blachford, then Sir Frederic Rogers, and under secretary of state for the colonies:

"I do not know whether you have seen the pamphlet just published, being the lord chief justice's charge in the cases of Nelson and Brand revised and amplified into a sort of treatise. I have read it with some disappointment, as I did the charge when reported in the newspapers.

"If it were not that some censorious people might say I spoke out of ignorance and presumption, I should feel inclined to say that the chief justice's treatise was somewhat deficient, largely redundant, and more or less unsteady. But what seems to me more pertinent to our business is the conclusion to which he comes—that if martial law is to be exercised at all (and he seems to assume, page 160, first paragraph of his last note, that it cannot always be dispensed with), it should be defined and regulated by legislative enactment. The course taken by this department has been the reverse; for we have issued instructions for the repeal of all legislative enactments authorizing martial law, and we have declared that if it is to be resorted to at all it must be resorted to on the responsibility of the governor, and without the authority of law. I call your attention to this as a matter which should not be passed over unnoticed—not at all with the intention of suggesting that any alteration should be made in the instructions to governors of colonies.

"I gather from different parts of the charge:

"1st. That there may be such a thing as martial law independently of statutory enactment.

"2d. That there may *not* be such a thing.

"3d. That if there is such a thing, it may be applicable only to military persons.

"4th. That if there is such a thing, it may be applicable to civilians also.

"5th. That if there is such a thing as martial law, it is certainly not the negation of all law.

"This last is the only distinct and positive conclusion which the chief justice seems to have arrived at.

"As to the definition and regulation of martial law by legislation, this may or may not be expedient; but if it be expedient I imagine that the legislation should be effected by the imperial Parliament in the first place, and by the colonial legislatures on the principles established by imperial legislation. But, for my own part, I doubt whether legislation by Parliament is either practicable or expedient. I see no signs in the chief justice's charge of attention given to what would be the difficulties of defining and regulating martial law by enactment; nor to the difficulties of giving effect to martial law in every sort of emergency through proceedings predetermined by law. The chief justice seems hardly to present any other side of the question than that which the evils and outrages suffered and perpetrated in the execution of martial law have suggested to his mind, and he seems to be occupied almost exclusively with the importance of prevention and restraint. The facts of the case before him, in his own view of them, seem to have riveted his attention to this side of the subject; and if his view was a just one and no other could be taken, this might be all as it should be in *charging a grand jury;* but in *recommending legislation* it would surely

have been desirable to see how the case would stand had the facts been other than he conceived them to be, and, indeed, to forecast a good many possible facts and combinations which the case before him may not have presented.

"Take, for example, the case of Gordon, and, without affirming or denying what it actually was, suppose it to have stood thus: Suppose that Gordon had had no complicity whatever in the outbreak at Morant Bay or in any criminal proceedings within the proclaimed district either antecedent or subsequent to the proclamation of martial law; suppose that there had been proof of his having been engaged in treasonable proceedings deserving death precedently to the proclamation of martial law and beyond its limits; suppose that the insurrection within the limits of martial law had been totally suppressed and put an end to before the 20th October, when Gordon was tried; suppose, however, that Dr. Bruce, or Mr. Levien, or any other persons who had been allies or adherents of Gordon in his treasonable designs and proceedings in the north, south, and west of the island, were at that moment actively engaged in an endeavor to bring about an insurrection in those parts and in all parts where troops were not, and that they were on the point of succeeding; suppose that the execution of Gordon at that point of time would strike terror into these other leaders, and by paralyzing their efforts save the island from a general insurrection; suppose all these suppositions (and the case, if hypothetical, which it may or may not be, is at all events such a case as might and could occur), and then the chief justice, as I understand him, would restrain by specific enactment the authorities administering martial law from saving the island by the instant execution of Gordon.

"It may be that the chief justice thinks the maintenance of principles essential to the due administration

of justice more important to mankind than the saving of a particular community at a particular time from insurrection and massacre; but I think he should have looked such hypothetical or other cases in the face, and that, when recommending restraints by enactment, he should have at least glanced at the other side of the question and the possibility that legislation might be best let alone, leaving the officers administering martial law to the restraints, however occasionally imperfect, of their conscience, their sense of responsibility, their fear of consequences, and their anticipation of public opinion.

"At page 120 he says: 'If there is any principle which, in the exposition and application of the criminal law of this country, is held more sacred than another, it is that you cannot by the *ex post facto* application of a law make a man liable to it for an act done before the law came into existence.' On this principle it would seem that none of the crimes committed on the 11th October should have been tried by martial law, which was not proclaimed till the 13th. Perhaps he would take a distinction between an *ex post facto* law constituting a crime or assigning a penalty, and an *ex post facto* law constituting a jurisdiction and a method of procedure. But this hardly appears in the terms he uses. Nor is it a principle which, in either sense, can have much to do with martial law. It is founded on the assumption that a man ought not to be punished when he has not been forewarned. It is a principle by which care for the offender takes precedence of care for the public, and by which, *when the act is wicked in itself*, justice is not promoted, but defeated. Something may be said for it under ordinary circumstances. Nothing can be said for it under martial law—a law only to be resorted to in circumstances in which the public safety is the object to be regarded, and a law which is not to be

administered by men learned in the law. In his note he expresses a hope that if martial law is recognized and established by Parliament, the exercise of it will be placed under due limitations and fenced round by the safeguards provided in the act of 1833 (3 and 4 Wm. IV. c. 4), for Ireland. The provisions of law respecting courts-martial in the act of 1833 would probably have made it impracticable to hold courts-martial at all in St. Thomas-in-the-East in October, 1865."

The views of the lord chief justice as to legislation were not adopted by the government. A commission was appointed to frame regulations for the guidance of those on whom the duty might hereafter devolve of proclaiming martial law and giving effect to it. It was right, I think, that this should be done. All I contend for is, that the stumbling-block of *law* should not be intruded upon the minds of men at the moment when they are suddenly charged with the rescue of a community from imminent destruction. Admonitions and even regulations, so they be of a general and flexible nature, may be usefully included in the course of instruction by which men are prepared for the various duties and emergencies of military life; and military men and governors of colonies may be enjoined not to forget them in any operations to be adopted under martial law, and to observe them so far forth as they may be found compatible with the paramount objects which can alone justify its existence; but there is a supreme rule of conduct to be derived from the conscience, the judgment, and the humanity of persons so employed, which, imperfect as may be the guidance and control it exercises, is the only rule which can be of any essential avail to the interests of humanity. Obedience absolutely imposed to preconceived dictations of authority or law, unless human nature should happily renounce

it as out of place when the emergency should arise, might involve consequences far more revolting to humanity than any which it was designed to prevent.

In this country public opinion, and the anticipation of its verdicts, exercises, on such occasions as those in question, a powerfully controlling influence, and even this control may chance to be excessive. To a certain extent, and perhaps in the majority of cases, English officers would have the courage to do what they might think right without more regard than enough to laws and regulations, or even to the menace which an uncertain public opinion holds over them. But it is quite as important that self-governed and humane men should not be needlessly intimidated as that those who may be wanting in humanity and self-government should be effectively controlled.

I have made room for a chapter on this revolt in Jamaica rather as an example from which to generalize in the consideration of some questions of permanent importance than with a view to estimate the merits or demerits of this or that person or proceeding. But it may be regarded also as curiously illustrative of the ways and tendencies of a people in forming, or seizing, or snatching their opinions.

Their instinct is to individualize and concentrate. They fasten, if they can, upon one person and one act. In this case the person was Governor Eyre, and the act was the execution of Gordon. In a just judgment, if I am capable of forming one, there was no act of the authorities in Jamaica in 1865 which was more distinctly deserving of approval. The transference under arrest from a place beyond the area of martial law to a place within it, there to be tried, and, if found guilty, executed, was of questionable legality. The evidence produced at

the trial was, in the opinion of the commissioners of inquiry, wholly insufficient to establish the charge preferred. It was evidence subsequently obtained which proved, if not all of which he was convicted, quite enough to have justified his sentence, even in the estimation of those who impugned it, had it been forthcoming at the time. But the governor, the brigadier-general, the commander of the forces, and the community generally had reason to be as well assured of Gordon's guilt as many a jury is when, in a just exercise of its judgment, it convicts a man of a capital offence on circumstantial evidence. They knew also that his death would strike terror into the disaffected population and their leaders throughout the island. I do not ask, as I have said before, what was lawful or unlawful, but what lawlessness was justifiable and right; and I am satisfied in my own mind that the execution of Gordon was just in itself and needful for the purpose of averting great dangers.

There is another question which does admit of a doubt. I think that, if the authorities had been able to estimate the full force of the death-blow dealt by that one execution to the hearts of the disaffected throughout the island, many lives of the more ignorant, and therefore less guilty, might have been spared.

The insurrection was of infinite service to the colony. The assembly was frightened out of its life. The governor's report of his negotiations for constitutional changes in favor of the crown was received the day before the return packet was to sail. There was no time to consult the cabinet, but I was authorized to send privately to the governor the draft of such a despatch as he was told he would probably receive by the ensuing packet in an authentic form. He learned from this draft that the crown would not accept the responsibility of legislative

functions unless accompanied by the crown's paramount power in the legislative body. It reached him just in time to take effect upon the negotiations before the assembly recovered from its panic: and that body, evicted for the moment of the rampant pride of power, so preposterously described by Sir Robert Peel, twenty-six years before, as "a high and haughty spirit of liberty," crept into a corner and died by its own hand.

Chapter XX.

ORDER OF ST. MICHAEL AND ST. GEORGE.—LIFE PEERAGES.—"CRIME CONSIDERED."—A PENAL CODE.

Anno Dom. 1869. Anno Æt. 69.

The Duke of Buckingham, shortly before the change of government in 1869, had taken steps for extending to the colonial service generally the eligibility to the order of St. Michael and St. George, to which only public servants whose service was connected with Malta and the Ionian Islands had been theretofore eligible. It devolved upon his successor, Lord Granville, to make the first appointments to the order, and he wrote to me on the subject (3d May, 1869): "I do not know whether your opinion was in favor of the extension of the St. Michael and St. George, or what Lyttelton calls the Angelic and Archangelic Order. I have some doubts of its expediency, but, it being an accomplished fact, I wish, as I explained at a dinner of the colonial society, to give it as much distinction as possible, by persuading those who I think would give a stamp to its value to accept it. I need not enter into details why you particularly belong to this category. I have obtained the queen's permission to offer you the Knight Commandership."

I answered (4th May): "I should like a day or two to consider what certainly never came into my head before; but if I am not to accept, it would certainly not be from any want of respect for the order or for titular distinctions generally; and anything I might receive from your

hands would be very acceptable, if it were on that account only."

The question I wished to consider was whether my acceptance of this distinction would interfere with the offer of another. For some years past there had been a question publicly discussed whether the House of Lords would not be the better for an admixture of peers whose patents should be limited to the one life. In the year 1856 the queen was advised to confer a peerage for life only on an eminent retired judge, by the title of Lord Wensleydale. The opposition took the opportunity thus afforded them of showing their power in the House of Lords. Lord Lyndhurst made a long speech, the object of which was to prove that the crown, though competent to confer titles of nobility for life, was not competent to confer, along with a title of nobility so limited, a title to a seat in the House of Peers with a corresponding limitation. The question was much debated, and in the issue a majority of the peers resolved that Lord Wensleydale was not entitled to a seat. Sir Francis Doyle, who had been staying with Lord Wensleydale at the time, came to see us at Sheen a day or two after, and I asked him what Lord Wensleydale's position would be with a seat in the House granted by the crown, and the crown's prerogative disputed by the House. His answer was one which any one who knew Frank Doyle would recognize as all his own: "Well, his position will be very much that of the fat lady at the crowded concert. The gentleman next her said, 'I am afraid, ma'am, you have nothing to sit upon.' And she replied, 'No, it is not that; but I have nowhere to put it.'"

The fate of the fat lady was not ultimately that of Lord Wensleydale. Any peerage conferred upon him would be virtually a life peerage, for he had no son to

succeed to it. The limitation in his patent had been introduced in order to launch the principle and feel the way, with a view to establish life peerages as a component part of the House of Lords. The result was to show that the general feeling was rather favorable to it than adverse. In 1869 Lord Russell, trusting to the feeling which had been thus elicited, was encouraged (in concert with the government, I believe, though no longer a member of it), to bring in a bill to enable the crown to create a limited number of life peerages, and he had given me some intimations of a wish to know whether I would like a life peerage.

The life peerages to be filled on the passing of the bill would not be, technically at least, at his disposal: he was not in office, Mr. Gladstone being first minister; and he had not asked the question directly and distinctly; but I understood him, and I took the opportunity of a speech of Lord Derby's to give him an implied answer (28th April, 1869):

"I see that Lord Derby professed his belief that a life peerage would not be attractive to the great majority of men really eminent in science and literature.* I entirely disagree from him, and I have no doubt that men of eminence in these kinds would be very glad of a life peerage; and this, not only because they might think they could be of some service in the House of Lords, but also for the honor and glory of it. I never heard that they had renounced the world and all its vanities, and I am sure they would think a life peerage a very desirable distinction."

Lord Russell thought that my acceptance of the order

* By this profession Lord Derby could oppose the measure without appearing to undervalue literature and science, but he can scarcely have really held the belief he professed.

would not affect my position as to the peerage; his advice was to accept, and I followed it.

Before the life-peerage bill reached the third reading, which was towards the end of the session, a change had come over political parties, some leading conservative peers withdrew their support, and the bill did not pass.

My sentiments were expressed in a letter to James Spedding (26th May, 1869): "Touching my coming title, there is certainly no need for condolence. I hold that I am to be congratulated, not by reason of the values you mention only, but of other values also. Why do I wear broadcloth, and not linsey-woolsey? Not because broadcloth indicates any particular merit on my part, or any use that I may be of in my day and generation, but because I consider I make a better appearance in broadcloth. There are some persons, perhaps, to whom the difference would seem unimportant. Kings and queens, looking down from their empyrean, would hardly notice it. But I have nothing to do with kings and queens. It is in other eyes than theirs that I am

> 'With practised step to prance
> And high-curvetting slow advance;'

and, indeed, I think my strongest sympathies are with servants, and generally with persons of a class inferior to my own. The title of A. P. V. A. (by which I suppose you mean, Author of 'Philip Van Artevelde') is of no use to me with these classes; and, even if it were, I should not be disposed to take the advice proffered to George Seacoal, and 'let my writing and reading appear when there is no need of such vanity.' But the other title may find favor in the eyes of persons of these classes. Nor do I think the worse of them on that account, nor the worse of any persons for having their minds and imaginations affected by orders and degrees and titular dis-

tinctions. There is no reason why their minds should be affected in that way if it does not come to them naturally; and there is no reason why they should not if it does. I am inclined to think that a better distribution of human respect and admiration is effected by different classes and individuals having different susceptibilities. I am myself rather deficient in respect and admiration for intellectual superiority taken apart; but I doubt whether it would be well that everybody should have as little respect for it as I have. So of superiority in courage. I would leave the admiration of that chiefly to the women; but it is highly expedient that it should have a sufficient tribute of admiration from one quarter or another. Far higher are the claims of moral and religious superiorities; yet if the reverence even for these were to be for these exclusively, and for these from all quarters and on all sides, I doubt whether the saints would be the more saintly for it, and I am disposed to think it would do them more harm than good. At all events, intellect, courage, wealth, etc., have each of them a tendency to tyrannize; and, perhaps, if either or all were pampered by admiration, they would not avail to check the tendency of each to become tyrannical by the mere antagonistic action of each upon each, unassisted by intermediaries; and there may be no small assistance rendered in tempering their respective arrogancies by the respect, which seems more or less natural in man, for birth, hereditary rank, and for orders and degrees.

> 'Take but degree away, untune that string,
> And hark! what discord follows! each thing meets
> In mere oppugnancy. . . .'

I do not go all lengths with Ulysses, and say,

> 'Frights, changes, horrors
> Divert and crack, rend and deracinate,

> The unity and married calm of states
> Quite from their fixure,'

but I think that probably intellectual and other autocrats, Senator Sumners and General Butlers, would abound.

"Perhaps, however, these views had not much to do with my acceptance of the order of St. Michael and St. George. I was asked to accept it on a ground which was merely complimentary and unreal, that my acceptance would be of advantage to the order. I regarded it, of course, as what it was, the offer of a favor; and when a favor is offered to one by a person whom one likes and respects, it seems to me to be the right and natural thing to take it and be thankful."

The broadcloth argument would have been better expressed in King Lear's language than in my own:

> "O reason not the need: our basest beggars
> Are in the poorest thing superfluous;
> Allow not nature more than nature needs,
> Man's life is cheap as beast's; thou art a lady;
> If only to go warm were gorgeous,
> Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
> Which scarcely keeps thee warm."

Aubrey de Vere had a few words to say upon the occasion (2d June, 1869): "It is, of course, a tribute to your services in the colonial office; and I am glad that there should thus be a permanent memorial of the circumstance that you, a poet, united the life active with the life contemplative; this, of course, casting no disparagement upon us who belong to the order, also respectable, of poets vagabond here upon earth. Titles for literature only I do not like. A person might as well be given a title for his virtues. . . . The title honorably commemorates what has been so important a part of your life, and one indirectly conducive to your poetry by its effects in consolidating and disciplining the mind."

I gave an account of my investiture in a letter dated Bournemouth, 4th July: . . . "I was summoned to London on official business, and went as soon as Alice was well enough for me to leave her; and when my business was over and I was about to return, I got a summons to attend the queen at Windsor, the next day, for an investiture of St. Michael and St. George, and I had not a rag of court dress. A thousand tailors were set to work, however, and, in exactly twenty-four hours, I found myself wanting nothing except a clean shirt and a white cravat. While I was dressing in the tailor's shop, skirmishers were thrown out, and a shirt was seized and secured; my pocket-handkerchief was converted into a cravat, and I reached the train for Windsor just in time. The queen smote me with a sword on the right shoulder and on the left, and I rose Sir Henry, kissed her hand, and, smitten also with a smile, retreated; and, though not 'expert in stepping backwards,' got off without any serious accident."

The conclusion of the letter is not to the purpose; but it reminds me of a bright hour or two, and I feel disposed to go on: "One of the pleasantest of the few evenings I passed in London was a very quiet evening at Lady Monteagle's—no one there but herself and F——, and for half an hour Monteagle"—grandson of the first Lord Monteagle—"just returned from abroad—bearing witness to the merits of the mountain air and redolent of the rose with which he had been living. He went his way, and then was left the beautiful F——, not dull or indifferent because we were old; but rather bright as a star between two clouds. I thought I should like to know her better; but I suppose it is true that in the case of most people who are pleasant and prepossessing, the best knowledge in one sense, *i. e.*, the knowledge which is most acceptable

and delightful, is that which one has before one knows their faults."

Of course I reported my proceedings to Alice (8th July, 1869): "At the luncheon [at Windsor Castle] I met several people whom I liked to meet—some whom I had not met for many years and some whom I see often. And I like to see a crowd. It was a gay crowd in colors and dresses of divers sorts, for there were three orders to be dealt with; and it would have been very gay but that we were all elderly or old, and there were no women except in the inner room, where the queen was with some pretty princess, I do not know whom. I performed my part in the ceremonial rather awkwardly; and if I like ceremonials, as you suppose (which I was not aware of), it is not certainly having a part to perform in them that I like. Even when I dine out and have to take some one down to dinner I never know what I am about; and in this case I was awkwardly slow to kiss the hand, not being aware when the time had come and the hand was ready. I suppose, however, the queen is used to that sort of awkwardness, and she only smiled a pleasant smile."

I was answered according to my deserts: "You are the best of good husbands for writing so much and so often (except that I had rather you would not write when you should be in bed), and you are the stupidest of poet-philosopher-statesmen to have put off your arrangements about clothing to the eleventh hour, and so be in doubt and difficulty past the twelfth, and have to rush into the presence of majesty probably as ungartered as Malvolio."

On the day after my sixty-ninth birthday, 19th October, 1869, in answer to a letter from James Marshall, I wrote: "As to my own experience of

'The waste and injuries of time and tide,'

all I have to complain of is that I have not, like Aubrey

de Vere, 'two good raptures a week.' I am in the habit of doing quite as much official work as I used to do in my youth and middle age, at least I think so; and I think, too, that I do it quite as well, and, moreover, quite as quickly—I should say, perhaps, more quickly. What I have lost is the state, intermittent, of course, but not infrequent, indeed, almost daily in my youth and middle age, of a sort of intellectual and imaginative luxuriousness, sometimes active, sometimes abandoned to itself, sometimes attended by

> 'Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought
> Industrious in its joy,'

sometimes seeming too delightful to be put to any purposes whatever, poetical or prosaic. That is gone, and hardly a hint of it returns."

Of the year 1869 I have nothing more to say, except that I published in that year a letter to Mr. Gladstone entitled "Crime Considered," the object of which was to propose certain amendments of the criminal law, some of them founded upon principles of a more or less innovating character. I was anxious to obtain for them, from the government, a measure of attention which I might have known the government could not afford to bestow. From eminent men of all other kinds and classes I met with much sympathy and concurrence; and I adverted to these attentions and inattentions in a letter to James Spedding: "I have had since the 24th December sixty-four letters about crime. I have answered about half of them. I fell in with Gladstone last week at Pembroke Lodge, and he had to confess, with shame and contrition, that he had not read my pamphlet. Sluggard! what can he have been about? Idling away his time with the Scarlet Woman, I suppose, and coaxing Ireland."

The Scarlet Woman did not encourage his attentions or

deserve his care; and, as all the world knows, the relations between him and her were soon to assume a different aspect. I told Mr. Gladstone that the letter, though addressed to him, was for the consideration of the home secretary rather than the prime minister. But, as I have said, I could not reasonably expect that my projects in their totality would be considered by either. No government of this country can hope to succeed in carrying through Parliament a large and innovating measure on which every lawyer in the House of Commons, and many another member, would have an opinion of his own, and seize the opportunity of making a motion and speaking a speech, and with nothing to recommend it but the possibility that it might promote the well-being of mankind. Bit-by-bit legislation is all that is practicable in this country on subjects in which neither the country nor any large party in it take an interest; and even the smallest bits will not always be swallowed if it be possible to toss them to the dogs. I did not abandon my projects, but I turned to another field of action.

The field to which I betook myself was colonial—comprising those of the colonies in which the legislative authority of the crown is paramount. I could not myself make the slightest pretensions to the learning and skill and industry required for the construction of a penal code; but a man was found, Mr. Robert S. Wright, of unrivalled abilities in that kind; and after three years of unremitting labor a code was produced. For ten months it was under revision by Sir FitzJames Stephen, whose work upon criminal law is, I believe, of high authority; conferences and discussions followed, leading to a concurrence on almost all the important points of difference; and in October, 1875, the draft code was placed in the hands of the secretary of state; whence I trust it will issue, in

due season, an approved work of much moment and magnitude in the history of criminal jurisprudence.*

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* *Dec.* 1884.—What has become of it I have never heard. It was sent out to all the crown colonies, and the authorities of Jamaica, at least, if not of the others, were ready and desirous to enact it, when a postponement was directed by the home government, I believe in order that Sir FitzJames Stephen's criminal code for England might take precedence, and any results of the discussion of that code might be available for the improvement of the other. How many years may pass before the British legislature can be got to adopt such a measure as a criminal code for England no one can tell, and in the meantime the benefits which the crown colonies might derive from theirs are thrown away. Such was the fate for no less than twenty-three years of the Indian code constructed by Lord Macaulay and his brother commissioners, during which years more than two hundred millions of our Indian subjects were deprived of the inestimable benefits conferred upon them when it was enacted in 1860.

Chapter XXI.

SIR FREDERIC ROGERS RETIRES.—HE ACCEPTS A PEERAGE.—USES OF A PEER.—I RETIRE.

Anno Dom. 1871-72. Anno Æt. 71-72.

Sir Frederic Rogers quitted the colonial office in 1871; and the letters exchanged between us on the occasion present rather an odd jumble of venison and valediction.

"I write," he began (August 7th, 1871), "to say that in the course of a few days [he was just starting for the Continent] a fawn will be despatched for Bournemouth. We find them good eating, roast or stewed. I am pleased and sorry to hear you miss me. Leaving you behind was *the* thing which I felt at the colonial office. The fact is that any under secretary must be, and I was, in a false position with you; and if the relation is not delightful, as it was to me, it runs the risk of being unendurable. I sometimes used to wonder how you tolerated me. But it was a great pleasure, and in some degree gratifying to my own vanity, to feel how absolutely without difficulty our relations were. Pleasures there must have been; but that there should have been no hitches, or suspicions or apprehensions or approximations of hitches, is a thing for which I was at first very grateful to you; and should have remained so had not our terms reached a point at which gratitude is left behind."

I have remarked in Chapter XIV., vol. 1, that "according to my observation of life, subordination comes more

easily to men—at least, to gentlemen—than the exercise of authority does." Thus the difficulty in our official relations, if any, was on his side: but it was a difficulty which he was fitted by nature to confront; for while his personal feelings were all that his letter expresses, there was a moral strength in him which made it certain that on any public question on which our opinions were opposed he would exercise the authority it was his duty to exercise in giving effect to his own. As for me, though, of course, on this question or that, I may have differed from him in opinion, I had a prevailing sense of his superiority in point of judgment which made acquiescence on particular occasions a matter of easy amenability.

First and foremost in my reply was the fawn: "'Let her come a' God's name, we are not afraid of her,' as the lord mayor said of the hare when he was out hunting. So said Cowper in answering an announcement that he was to expect the arrival of a bustard, and so say I of the fawn. Yes, indeed—you and I did dwell together in unity, dealing with men and affairs of divers kinds and tempers, and the unity was very pleasant and very precious; and if the ointment on Aaron's beard that ran down to the skirts of his clothing was equally precious, I should like to have a pot of it to take with me on my way. At the same time I have nothing to complain of: and if there is any one who has reason to complain, it is the man or men who have to wait for my vacancy till I feel sufficiently superfluous to make way for them."

A question was raised in the office about presenting Sir Frederic with "a testimonial," or a dinner to serve as one, and my opinion was asked. What had been my answer I made known to him; he thanked me much for it, and I replied (January 5th, 1871): "I had no sort of doubt as to what your sentiments would be; though, in intimating

my opinion, I modestly premised that it was the opinion of a man who lived altogether out of the world of testimonials and dinners, and knew nothing of them but what he saw in the newspapers. As to testimonials, I am prepared to testify against them with my last breath; and as to testimonial dinners, I had rather dine every day of my life on the dinner of the Irish member whom O'Connell met in Piccadilly. Do you remember? O'Connell asked him to dine, mentioning that the dinner he had to offer was nothing but beef and potatoes. 'And sure,' said his friend, 'wasn't I going to ask *you* to dine with *me*, if you hadn't spoken first; and just to the same dinner *bating the beef!*' Assuredly O'Connell's dinner, or even his friend's, would be welcome to me in comparison with a public dinner; and more especially one at which I was to stand by and hear you made a victim to panegyrics."

Sir Frederic's successor, Mr. Herbert, said to me, I remember, when the question was discussed between us, that a peerage would be the proper testimonial; and before the year was out, the same notion occurring to Mr. Gladstone, a peerage was offered and accepted.

He was in Switzerland at the time, whither was sent what I had to say (12th October, 1871): "I have just learned from Meade that you accept the peerage, and that there is no longer any secret about it. My first intelligence was from the announcement in the newspapers. It appeared afterwards that the announcement was unauthorized by you, and that there were some difficulties in the way. I suppose they arose out of the relations of a peerage with income and expenditure, etc., and a residence in London during the session of Parliament. On such questions as what is called *supporting* a peerage I have a view of my own. I have always thought that, when necessary, rank should stand in the place of keeping up appearances, rather

than involve cost on account of them. You should bear in mind that—

> 'King Stephen was a worthy peer,
> His breeches cost him half a crown,'

and whether your breeches cost you much or little, you are assuredly as worthy of a peerage as any man who has taken his seat in that House since the time of King Stephen."

And then he asked me a question; and I answered it (October 22d, 1871): "You ask for my views, if I have any, of the uses of a peer. I do not place as low among them as some philosophers would his passive quality of affecting the imaginations of men in the way in which man's imagination is, and always will be, affected by orders and degrees. A peer is one of an order and degree which, next to the order and degree of royalty, has a conservative operation upon the minds of men. What that operation amounts to may be partly estimated by the operation of the order and degree next above it. Wonderful in my eyes, though my eyes were always open to the effects of majesty, has been the outcry against the queen in the last two or three years for not showing herself to her people. And not less wonderful has it seemed that of all our very able and intellectual writers on public affairs, with their infinite variety of views, no one has asked the question—'What went ye out for to see?' or has found it in his heart to make the answer that it was not a prophet or more than a prophet, but really and truly this time a reed shaken with the wind. It would appear that a shadow has fallen across the whole country, intellectual and unintellectual, philosophic or popular, because it finds itself deprived of the light of the countenance of the queen —a poor, bereaved, elderly lady, with broken spirits and indifferent health. What stronger evidence can there

be of the influence of orders and degrees? And if it be said that there is some substantial political power at the back (as some ex-ministers have been lately asseverating), the answer is, that even that power, such as it is, is derived from the other. And, whencesoever derived, probably no person conversant with public affairs would venture to assert that it is equal to the power exercised by divers peers and members of the House of Commons. Therefore, provided you eschew, as I hope you will, gambling, bankruptcy, drunkenness, and any conspicuous and palpable profligacy, you will fulfil some of the uses of a peer, even though you should do nothing but plant trees at Blachford, and feed and fatten upon that excellent venison of which you sent me a specimen just before you went abroad, and which has made me long ever since for your safe and happy return.

"And, next, as to your legislative uses. I feel all the difficulty that you can possibly feel in making up one's mind on political questions. I have felt it all my life long, and should have felt it even without any spending of the determinative forces on matters of mere administration: but unless you should become a cabinet minister (which is likely enough, perhaps) the questions coming to you for decision as a peer will be, for the most part, or perhaps I should say would be to me and *may* be to you, less perplexing than those which are presented to a member of the other House. They are so often questions of the exercise of the veto which has now been transferred from the crown to the House of Lords—questions whether it is not better to do nothing. But it is in respect of the political and organic rather than the administrative questions in which legislation is concerned that I should feel it most difficult to take decisions; and whenever I might meet with serious difficulties and doubts on organic ques-

tions, I should set up my rest in things as they are. Of course I am aware that there are many exceptions and distinctions to be taken in carrying such a principle into practice; but still I feel that there is something of substance in it which would often come to my relief.

"And, lastly, how will you speak? If in conformity with the natural action of your mind, it will be with impetuosity constantly checked and interrupted by pauses for circumspection and revision. And what will be the effect? Will the natural force of your mind be the more recognized for the very naturalness with which it breaks its way, or will it compete at a disadvantage with the smooth volubility of practised performers? I have faith in the former result. I remember Carlyle's lectures, delivered when he was an obscure writer. I had made great efforts to obtain for him as numerous an audience as possible. Though he was nervous to the last degree, he resolved that they should be spoken extempore. His utterances were wild and strange and convulsive, and once and again I felt as if it would all fall to pieces; but I observed before long that the very throes and gasps and agonies of the parturition served to enchain the attention of his hearers: and it was these lectures which gave Carlyle his first launch into popularity."

Mrs. Cameron was not content that Sir F. Rogers should be raised to the peerage and I be left a commoner. My reply to her is in a letter of the 15th October, 1871: "I beg to say that in one or two of your late letters you have been talking something not wholly unlike nonsense about me in connection with Frederic Rogers's peerage. 1st. Self-depreciation is not at all in my line, and I mean nothing of the kind when I say that Rogers's administrative power is far, far superior to mine. 2d. Rogers was an under secretary of state, which I am not. It is true that

it is by my own choice that I am not; but that choice had its natural and necessary consequences. A man cannot both renounce and enjoy. 3d. Rogers was already in the next rank to the peerage. He is the eighth in descent of a line of baronets; I am the son of the younger son of an insignificant squire. 4th. Rogers has an estate and no son; I have a son and no estate—both matters which, in the eyes of the ministers, must have an essential bearing on the creation of a peer. You will see, therefore, that there is no question whatever of such a comparison as has suggested itself to you. In point of fact the only possible peerage for me was the life peerage Lord Russell designed for me under his life-peerage bill of 1869. It was read a second time in the Lords with little opposition; but was unable to get on, partly for want of time before the session closed, and partly (if I recollect right) from some sudden turn in the posture of political parties in the Lords. I should have rather liked the life peerage, but I can do very well without it."

In another year or two my own retirement was to follow that of Sir F. Rogers. The first foretokening of it occurs in a letter to Alice on the 16th June, 1872: "When I was at Blachford a dim sort of presentiment of retiring on a pension, which I had not liked to mention in the days of its dimness, revealed itself with a little more of light upon it, and I spoke to Blachford. He, I believe, has always had a feeling about my subordinate position which I have not had myself; and the notion of my retirement seemed very acceptable to him. We had a good deal of talk about it, and yesterday I received the letter from him which I enclose, and to-day I send the answer, of which I enclose a copy. That answer is one which he will be able to show should it seem desirable; but I send him along with it a separate note begging him not to commit me to

anything, inasmuch as I have not yet consulted you, nor made up my own mind on the subject. What chiefly weighs with me is that Ebden has been for years doing the most laborious part of the business which it would otherwise have belonged to me to do. He has been doing it, no doubt, by his own choice; but it has been done with admirable efficiency. My opinion was that when Blachford retired and Herbert * succeeded him, Ebden ought to have succeeded Herbert. I should have had no objection to serve under him; and I think that at all events the time has come when he ought not to be serving under me, and doing the most laborious part of my work. Then I think that, for much of what I used to do, I have been lately superfluous. There are now in full activity one permanent under secretary and two assistant under secretaries—all three decidedly competent and able men, all somewhat recently appointed, and each naturally desirous to make his efficiency felt and to have an opinion of his own on every question. This lays the secretary of state open to some of the evils which are said to attend a multitude of counsellors. I think it is but rarely that the present secretary of state has been the better for my advice. If I should retire I should not contemplate, as Blachford contemplates for me, occasional references on large questions. Some such notion was entertained when Sir James Stephen retired. Practically it would come to nothing; and as far as it is intended to satisfy my own appetite for work, I should not desire it. It is habitual, daily, methodical work which I should miss if I were to miss any. The single subject of the penal code I might wish to be heard upon, for the chance of being of some use in consummating what it has fallen to my lot to initiate."

* Then assistant under secretary of state.

There were other portions of my work which I could not have abandoned without regret had they not been already to a large extent in the hands of two men of no ordinary industry and ability. I wrote to Lord Blachford (15th June, 1872): "As to the business I should be leaving behind, Ebden has for some years done by far the more laborious portion of the general business, great and small, which has been done up-stairs; and for the last two or three years or more I have devolved upon Fairfield a large portion of the work connected with prisons, hospitals, lunatic asylums, and criminal statistics. If Ebden and Fairfield should continue in charge of the general West Indian business and those other matters, I could leave all behind without any solicitude as to the amount of attention they would receive in subordinate hands, as well as in those which are not, or which are less, subordinate.

"Then as to the penal code, I *am* solicitous about that; and I had thought myself under an obligation (which probably no one but myself would recognize) to await the completion of Wright's draft (which may be expected before the end of this year), and give him what assistance I could in bringing it under consideration. But for the last year or two I have much doubted whether I should possess, or whether, indeed, I ought to be allowed to possess, much influence in the consideration of the draft. In the matter of penal law I am more or less of an innovator; and it is very rarely that an innovator who is not in a position to exercise pressure *from above* can give effect to his views. What I chiefly advocate in the way of innovation would be, in my own belief, susceptible of very cautious and tentative beginnings; but they would be beginnings upon a new principle; and the adoption of new principles in a specific branch of science is not brought

about by writing and arguing in an office, unless supported by weighty authority *in that kind.* At the end of my 'Considerations Preliminary to the Preparation of a Penal Code' I wrote: 'Much of what I have said, if deserving of consideration, will need to be considered by men whose practical conversancy with penal jurisdiction shall entitle their opinions to be regarded with respect; and no important innovation, not hitherto sifted in the controversies and discussions of lawyers and statesmen, should be adopted without the sanction of some high authority in matters of jurisprudence.' Now I have reason to believe that some of these high authorities will be prepared to support some of my views: but whether this be so or not, it does not seem likely that my continued attachment to the colonial office would make much difference; especially if, as you are led to think, I should have an opportunity of being heard, my retirement notwithstanding."

The decision was taken two months later, and arrangements were made for continuing in my retirement my connection with the several subjects in which I was especially interested.

I announced it to Lord Grey (30th August, 1872): "... Before I received your letter I had been intending to write to you. I am about to retire from the colonial office, and I should not have liked to do so without mentioning it. On looking back to the times when I served under you, I have been rather wondering at myself, and thinking that, though there may be things of which you are not tolerant, there are others of which you can be more tolerant than most men. But what I wished to say is, that during the last twelve years, disabled as I have been for daily attendance at my office, I could scarcely have held on to it but for the offer you made me in 1847 of the place of under secretary of state in succession to

Stephen. My position has been so anomalous that, though it was at the desire of the secretary of state that I remained in it, I could not well have continued for all these years to stand in the way of the promotion of others, had I not formerly refused it for myself. I venture to think that the public interests have not been the worse for the greater leisure which so much confinement to the house has given me. I have projected and carried forward some reforms in colonial administration which without that leisure it would not perhaps have occurred to me to undertake, or have been possible for me to work out to the point they have now reached. Lord Kimberley wishes me to keep my hand upon them still, notwithstanding my retirement; and I am willing and desirous to do so. But the office is well manned; the under secretary and the two assistant under secretaries are all three able and industrious, and there are some clerks who are not less so. My retirement is, therefore, not unseasonable as regards the department, any more than at seventy-two years of age it can be called unseasonable as regards myself.

"In speaking of your offer of 1847, there comes to me a dim recollection of something very abrupt and uncouth in my way of refusing it. I do not know that I ever explained to you why I refused it, and indeed I could not properly have given the explanation at the time. The reason was that Stephen had applied to me, as to one of his most intimate friends, for my advice as to whether he should or should not retire. I advised him in the affirmative; and after advising *him* to retire, it was of course impossible for me to step into his place: nor could I allow the reasons of my refusal to transpire without seeming to invite a waiver of them. But I felt at the time—and the feeling has come back upon me—that I managed the matter very awkwardly with you; and that I never said

what any man who was not very graceless and ungrateful would naturally have said upon such an occasion."

Lord Grey approved of my retirement, and had no recollection of any abruptness in the manner of refusing his offer of the place of under secretary of state in 1847. He had not had the slightest suspicion, he said, of the real motive, as I had now explained it. "If I remember right," he added, "you put your decision a good deal upon your being unwilling to give up your whole time to the public service, and thus to debar yourself from literary pursuits, which, considering the great success you had had in those pursuits, I thought very natural." This, as I have explained under the date of 1847, *was* a motive, as shown in my letters of that time to my father and mother, as also was my weakness of health. He proceeds: "If the fact of my having made you the offer facilitated your subsequent retention of your place when unable to give personal attendance in the office, I may congratulate myself upon having done the public a great service by having made it."

On the 11th September, 1872, I wrote to a friend: "As to my change of life, it has not taken effect yet. I am not to drop my work till the end of the month. It is true, as you say, that I have been used to look upon my work as a necessary of life; and I have yet to learn how to live without it. But when I had once come to the decision that there were good reasons why I should retire I found my feelings about it change rather rapidly, and I am now looking on to the end of the month as bringing a relief rather than a privation. Perhaps Blachford's resignation a year and a half ago made more difference to me than I had been aware of at once. He has been the greatest and most affectionate friend of my latter life, and perhaps I did not know how much of my love of my

work was due to him. As to my autobiography—yes, that is to be my resource for occupation; and I have begun already the work of reading and weeding great bundles of old letters."

Chapter XXII.

SIR JAMES STEPHEN.—LORD MELBOURNE.—MR. GLADSTONE.

Anno Dom. 1872. Anno Æt. 72.

Lord Granville once told me that I ought to republish "The Statesman," illustrated by portraits of the politicians who had been personally known to me. That work is on too small a scale for such portraits to push their way in. If a place could be found for them in this, it would be here, at the close of my official life. But the question is, are there any such portraits producible? I have had occasion, in earlier chapters, to say something of three or four statesmen who have been more or less known to me. Among these there are some, and pre-eminently one, of whom, if a *life* were to be written, it would be a most interesting life, presenting an admirable model of what a statesman ought to be: but, with scarce an exception, there is no one, as seen by me, who will lend himself to a *picture*. Lord Bacon says, "There is no excellent beauty without some strangeness in the proportion." The portrait-painter in "St. Clement's Eve" is quite aware of this, and understands how it happens. Montargis, adverting to his portrait of the Duchess of Burgundy, puts a question to him:

> "The mole
> Upon the neck—is that, as some aver,
> An added charm, or is it not a blemish?"

To which the reply is:

"There is a power in beauty which subdues
All accidents of Nature to itself.
Aurora comes in clouds, and yet the cloud
Dims not, but decks her beauty. So of shape;
Perfect proportion, like unclouded light,
Is but a faultless model; small defect
Conjoint with excellence more moves and wins,
Making the heavenly human."

Montargis is not convinced:

"For myself,
Unto things heavenly am I devote,
And not to moles and weals or humps and bumps."

But whatever theory we may adopt or reject as to beauty when we are *painting* the picture of a woman, there can be no question that distinct individuality is essential to effectiveness in the *written* picture of a man: and it is some irregularity, incongruity, or disproportion, and perhaps a little eccentricity, which enables us to individualize with effect.

Now perhaps I might find some mole or weal or hump or bump, to give effect to the picture of some statesman whom I have known well. But in that case, though the picture might present in its totality what is much to be commended, and though I may permit myself to see my friend as he is, when I see him with

"that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,"

yet I should not like to be quite so coolly discriminating when painting his picture to be sent to the Exhibition.

There are two men, however, of whom I may venture to give some sort of scribbled etching, which is all that is meant when a picture by a pen is hazarded. The one, Lord Melbourne, a man with whom, much as I admired him, I had merely the slight and social acquaintance which imposes no restraint; the other, James Stephen, a

true and valued friend, but a man of so high an order, spiritual, moral, and intellectual, that an indication of some little peculiarities pertaining to him can have no other effect than to verify and attest the likeness.

Such a scratch of a sketch as I can give of Stephen was given in a letter to Lord Granville, of 7th December, 1869: "What you say of James Stephen is very much what I should say myself; only I should add two or three superlatives to what you say of his abilities, knowledge, and working power, and modify what you say about manner. He had an intellect of a wide range and a singular subtilty, with much activity of the imaginative faculty—I think one of the largest intellects of his day and generation. The origin of the outcry against him was faithfully represented in the epithets used: 'Mr. Mother-Country Stephen,' and 'Mr. Over-Secretary Stephen.' For more than twenty-five years, during short tenures of strong secretaries of state, and entire tenures, whether short or not, of some who were not strong, he, more than any other man, virtually governed the colonial empire. Not that he was otherwise than profoundly subordinate; but he found the way to bring men to his own conclusions. And his advantages from knowledge, experience, intellectual power, and enormous industry were such that perhaps no man of sense could have failed to defer largely to his judgment.

"He was fervently religious; and he shared the anti-slavery sentiments of his father, Master Stephen, and his uncle, Mr. Wilberforce, with an ardor fully equal to their own. It was this ardor which led him, when he had not long entered middle age, to exchange a practice at the bar, yielding £3000 a year, for the office of counsel to the colonial office, with £1500, whereby he hoped to get a hold upon the policy of the government in the matter of slavery. In this he was eminently successful; and it was this success which first raised the outcry.

"The outcry took effect upon Lord Derby, when he became secretary of state for the colonies in 1833; and he began by renouncing all aid or advice from Stephen in the slavery measures which at that moment it had become indispensable that the government should adopt. He took counsel with Sir James Graham, and they devised a scheme which was brought before the House of Commons, and exploded in a single night, to Lord Derby's signal discomfiture; and in this predicament he had recourse to Stephen, allowing him only a few days for the preparation of a new measure. Stephen taxed his wonderful powers to the utmost to keep the prescribed time; and at one moment his brains were so shaken that he was advised to get on the top of a stage coach and take a long day's journey any whither, by way of an intermission, which he did. Perhaps the effect of that early strain may have rendered his brains a more easy prey to the malady which came upon him in 1847, and drove him from office. Lord Derby made a great speech, which in substance was a reproduction of a long report by Stephen; and having sucked his orange and made his speech, he laid his orange aside. I recollect something Stephen said to me many years after, which will give you both an idea of how he was treated, and a little specimen of the richness of his conversational diction. My son was dangerously ill with peritonitis; and Stephen having given me a rather minute account of a similar illness of Lord Derby's son and of what was done in that case, proceeded: 'You will wonder how I came to know all this; but the fact is that I met Lord Derby at the *levée* the other day, and he spoke to me of his son's illness in a tone for which I was quite unprepared; for in all the time when I saw him daily upon business, I cannot recollect that he ever said one word to me about anything else but

business; *and when the stupendous glacier which had towered over my head for so many years came to dissolve and descend upon me in this parental dew, you may imagine, etc., etc.*'

"As to his views upon other colonial questions, they were, perhaps, as you have heard, more liberal than those of most of his chiefs; and at one important conjuncture he miscalculated the effect of a liberal confidence placed in a Canadian assembly, and threw more power into their hands than he intended them to possess: but I am too little conversant with what took place out of my own division of business to say much about his colonial policy at large.

"He had, as you suppose, a strong will, and he had great tenacity of opinion: so that, if he did make a mistake (which was very seldom, considering the prodigious quantity of business he despatched), his subordinates could scarcely venture to point it out; he gave them so much trouble before he could be evicted of his error. And, in like manner, he was at a great disadvantage in private life, from being so sensitive that his friends did not dare to mention anything which they thought might be mended: not that he would be angry or quarrel with them, but that he suffered so much from it. Perhaps I was more hardy than most of his friends. I remember on one occasion saying: 'But surely the simple thing to do was—so and so;' to which he answered doubtfully, adding, 'The truth is, that I am *not* a simple man;' to which I replied, 'No, you are the most composite man that I have met with in all my experience of human nature.'

"His manner was not, I think, what you suppose, stern and pompous; but it was singularly infelicitous, and no doubt had a great deal to do with his unpopularity. He

had been, in early life, shy beyond all shyness that you could imagine in any one whose soul had not been pre-existent in a wild duck. And though some of the shyness wore off in after life, much remained to the last, and the manner resulting from it remained. When he talked to you his eyes were invisible; and he went on in a mild, low, slow, continuous stream of discourse, as if afraid to stop, not knowing what might happen. And the wonder was, that with all the monotony of utterance, there was such a variety and richness of thought and language, and often so much wit and humor, that one could not help being interested and attentive. But to strangers coming to him on business, of course his talk could not be of the same quality, while it *was* of the same continuity: and I recollect one indignant gentleman saying that, from the moment when he entered Stephen's room at the office, intent upon something he had to say to him, Stephen began to speak, and after speaking for half an hour without a moment's pause, rose, bowed, thanked him for his valuable information, and rang the bell.

"I have answered you *long;* but if you ask old people about past times, you must expect them to be garrulous, and you have no right to complain."

Having had occasion to speak of Sir James Stephen and his ways and works more than once in my first volume, I will be content to say no more of him here, and I pass to my other sitter.

Though it was only by meeting him in society that I knew Lord Melbourne, the impression he made upon me was distinct. In conversation his *tone* was careless; but it would have been a mistake to suppose that what he said was said thoughtlessly. He had no vanities, and he cared little for effect in conversation, except in so far as it amused him with himself; but he read and thought in

divers directions—in some which might have been supposed to lie a good deal out of his way of life. He was conversant, I believe, with the writings of the early fathers of the Church; but I should imagine that he read them from curiosity and for entertainment more than for edification. If he had moral or religious sentiments of any particular gravity, they were not only kept out of sight, but more or less slighted externally. What was to be seen was a manly and robust constitution of mind and body, with an easy and epicurean enjoyment of life—life physical, life social, and life intellectual. Invariable good-humor went along with it; and the result was a man whom it was more pleasant to meet than almost any other person society in London had to produce.

The interest and, if I am right in my conjecture, the amusement which theological fancies and caprices afforded him were not confined to those which came before him in the encounters of the ancient divines with the heresies of the past. Some which belonged to his own generation were interesting also. At the time when he was a member of the government (as home secretary, I think, and before he was at the head of it) Mr. Spencer Percival, eldest son of the first minister of that name, was a leading member—"Archangel," as they called him—of the Irvingite Church. He was a sincere and devout man; and though, like another of their "Angels," Mr. Henry Drummond, a man of the world and a man of wit, these qualities seemed to be utterly lost and absorbed when a religious fancy took possession of him. Once he conceived himself to have come to the knowledge (whether by special revelation or by interpretation of the prophecies I do not remember) that the end of the world was to arrive at some particular date not far distant; and he imagined also that he had been charged with a mission to make the fact

known to each of the queen's ministers. He went round to them accordingly, and was received in different moods by different men. Some were impatient of the interruption to their business by a somewhat prolonged deliverance of what they regarded as fanatical nonsense. Lord Melbourne, on the contrary, listened with amused and untiring attention to the end. Then he inquired—rubbing his hands with suppressed glee: "Were there not to be false prophets about that time?" And, knowing Spencer Percival, as I did, in his seasons of pleasantness and mirth, I can scarcely imagine that some gleam of his sunshiny, secular self would not then have broken through the cloud of prophecy that enveloped him.

In Lord Melbourne's way of dealing with men there was sometimes a sort of blunt adroitness, contrasting strangely with the solemnities of high office commonly supposed to belong to the model statesman. When a board of commissioners was to be constituted for the supervision of charitable endowments, a well-known member of Parliament of more than ordinary abilities, who had for some years been successful in obtaining the ear of the House of Commons—for he had a real gift of oratory—aspired to be one of the three of whom it was to be composed. Unfortunately, in his earlier life he had lost his character,* and that fact was not altogether forgotten. He had considerable claims upon the government, and he

* Southey told me what had transpired in a suit at law, and how it had been dealt with by the judge. It came out in evidence incidentally that Mr. ——, who was a solicitor, had advised a client to sell an estate, and then, contriving that it should be sold at a disadvantage, had bought it surreptitiously in another man's name. At the conclusion of the trial the judge adverted to this proceeding, and said: "I wish it to be publicly understood in this court that a man cannot cheat his client in the way in which Mr. —— has cheated his client—without impropriety—without great impropriety."

urged them on the secretary of the treasury without avail. One commissioner of the three was appointed—and then another. The third was still a possibility. He despaired of the secretary of the treasury, and as his last chance he went direct to Lord Melbourne. He recounted the many occasions on which he had supported the government in the House of Commons and the important services he had rendered. Lord Melbourne heard him to the end; and then in one sentence rescued himself from any charge of ingratitude on the one hand or improper concession on the other: "But, damn the fellows, they say they won't serve with you."

He was first minister at the beginning of the present reign; and the deeper and more serious sentiments that lay hidden in his nature came into exercise in his care of the queen. There can be no doubt that he had a true and fervent affection for her, which, as we know from herself, was amply recognized and returned. Except what I have heard from others, I know nothing of courts or of their ways; but I should imagine that when they are what it is considered, perhaps justly, that they should be, the life led in them must be rather a dull life, especially for the highest personage. To move about in an atmosphere of profound respect which it is a duty not to dispense with or disturb, would seem to be intolerably tiresome; and a girl or a woman in such a position is more inexorably bound to it than a man. If the girl-queen found her court as decorously dull as I am imagining that courts ought to be, such a first minister as Lord Melbourne, entitled by his office and adapted by his nature to be more easily and brightly companionable than any one else, must have been a very godsend to her.

At the time of Queen Victoria's accession the education of the people was one of the gravest questions of the

day; and no doubt its importance had been weightily borne in upon her; but still she must have felt herself a little lightened of it when the success in the world of a family of high aristocratic position was adduced by her first minister as an example the other way: "I don't know why they make all this fuss about education, ma'am; none of the ——s can read and write, and they get on very well, ma'am."

Solicitude was not natural to Lord Melbourne; and from some of his ways, superficially regarded, it might have been supposed that he was a little reckless. This would have been a mistake. He certainly did not care to seem more solicitous than he was, and possibly he liked to seem less. Sydney Smith believed that he devoted long and laborious hours of the night to dry commercial questions, and then affected to know nothing about them. He may have had good reasons for desiring to be supposed to have nothing to say to one or another of them; and, on the other hand, it is quite possible that he may have indulged himself in being a little whimsical. He certainly did indulge himself in that way more than any other man in his sort of position could have done with impunity. None of our public men have aimed less at *playing the part* of a cautious custodian of the public weal. Some of them, perhaps, have aimed at it a little too much. In political, and especially politico-official life in this country, nothing contributes more surely to success than the reputation of being what is called "a safe man." And a safe man is sometimes one whom no consideration for public interests will induce to run risks, knowing them to be such, of miscarriage and personal defeat. Of course, there is a sort of safe man who is not so self-seeking; and, in the case of a politician who has great present influence and a long public life in prospect, the public and the per-

sonal interests are often much intertangled. He must retain the confidence of the people for their own sakes.

Sir Robert Peel was pre-eminently a safe man—at least in acts and works and public appearances. Lord Aberdeen, indeed, than whom, I suppose, no man knew him better, once told me that he was the most indiscreet man in conversation he had ever met with; and this surprised me much; for the coldness and stiffness of his manner was quite in accordance with his reputation for caution and reserve. But it may be that conversational ease and fluency will better enable a man to maintain whatever reserve it is his purpose to maintain, than either a strained taciturnity or a penury of speech. I have observed somewhere in "The Statesman," speaking of men who betray secrets from being shy and unready, that there are few wants more urgent for the moment than the want of something to say. It is difficult, I admit, to imagine such a want in Sir Robert Peel; but I find it still more difficult to conceive what else could make him indiscreet in conversation. He once spoke to a friend of mine, who knew him but little, of his "unfortunate manner," as having led to his sentiments towards that person being misunderstood. But whether Lord Aberdeen was right or wrong, Sir Robert, undoubtedly and not undeservedly, stood before the public as, more than any other politician of his time, a safe man.

Now, as I have said, Lord Melbourne might easily have passed for the opposite of safe. He did eccentric things; and eccentricity goes far in the public mind to inspire, and, indeed, in most cases to justify, distrust of a man's political prudence. But the truth is that Lord Melbourne could *afford* to be eccentric; or, at least, to do eccentric things now and then. And another truth is that the eccentricity was in the garment only; and that it was wont

to cover a body of solid sense. Or perhaps I should rather say, that it consisted in throwing off upon occasion the official garment in his official dealings with men, and being more of his genuine self than is usual, or than in most political and official men would be natural; for there is a second nature bred of use and wont which in most men is stronger than the first.

Of one of these outbreaks of himself I gave an account, in a letter to Sir Frederic Rogers, on the day following a discussion in the House of Commons of the services rendered many years before by Sir Francis Head,* at the time of the Canadian rebellion. He was then Lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada; and, rejecting the aid of the regular troops sent to him by the governor-general, had called out the militia to fight their own fellow-colonists. His venture was successful, and the rebellion was suppressed; but his conduct was disapproved by the secretary of state for the colonies, and he was recalled. I wrote (12th July, 1864): "What took place in the House of Commons last night about Sir Francis Head reminds me of Lord Melbourne's way of dealing with his claims. After his return from Upper Canada, highly indignant, he appealed to Lord Melbourne. Lord Melbourne appointed him in South Street at ten o'clock. He went. Lord Melbourne was dressing. He was shown up to Lord Melbourne's dressing-room. Lord Melbourne was shaving. He begged Sir Francis to take a seat. He went on shaving. Sir Francis stated his case, recounted his proceedings, and alleged that he had saved the colony. 'And so you did,' said Lord Melbourne, and went on shaving. Sir Francis, much encouraged, proceeded with renewed energy, and enlarged upon the risks he had run and the

* Not my friend Sir Edmund.

services he had rendered, and at last came to a close. Lord Melbourne laid down his razor, and replied, 'But you're such a damned odd fellow.' And this was all the answer to his appeal; and I imagine that it was substantially the true answer. Sir Francis was a man of no ordinary abilities, but bold beyond the bounds of prudence. He had cut a wonderful somersault and lit upon his feet. If he were to be employed again, everybody knew that there would be more somersaults, and nobody knew where he would light next."

My stories have shown that Lord Melbourne's language was not wanting in the use of expletives. In the earlier years of his life swearing was still customary, though becoming less so. During the whole of last century, swearing, as well as drinking, was a matter of course with all gentlemen who were not in holy orders. In the beginning of this century I think the presence of a clergyman was considered to place some restraint upon it. I remember being present in my boyhood when a laic, not inadvertently, swore an oath, making at the same time a sort of apologetic bow to an elderly clergyman, who returned the obeisance in a manner which seemed to say: "Never mind me." Some years later I heard an account of an interview between the Duke of Wellington and Archbishop Howley, procured by the duke (then first minister) with the object of persuading the primate to support the Roman Catholic Relief Bill. The duke said: "Oh, by God, my lord archbishop, you must vote with us." The archbishop replied: "By the *grace* of God, my lord duke, I will not."

That the surviving majority of the gentlemen brought up in the last century should have contrived to get rid of such habits in the first half of this is more surprising than that some of them, like Lord Melbourne and the Duke of

Wellington, should have failed to do so. Lord Melbourne was incorrigible. Sydney Smith had once some business to transact with him at his office, and, after a few preliminary remarks of Lord Melbourne's, was led to make a proposal: "If you have no objection, we will take everybody and everything as sufficiently damned already, and proceed to business."

What more I have to say about Lord Melbourne is of another complexion:

> "To be a prodigal's favorite, then, worse truth,
> A miser's pensioner—behold our lot!
> Oh, man! that from thy fair and shining youth
> Age might but take the things youth needed not." *

The transition from a prodigal's favorite to a miser's pensioner was precipitated in Lord Melbourne's case by an attack of paralysis. The transition was precipitated, but the altered state was prolonged:

> "Death his dart
> Shook, but delayed to strike."

And such a prolongation, mournful as it is to contemplate in whatever sphere, takes a somewhat deeper color of mournfulness in the case of a life which was not only, by its nature, one of abounding temporal enjoyment, but was also busied in a high temporal vocation. In the case of such a man so much seems to be buried alive.

Two men of Lord Melbourne's time, conspicuous in the same sphere—Mr. Huskisson and Sir Robert Peel—had the better fortune of sudden death by accident. Canning died after an illness of a few weeks, just about the time predicted by Southey in a letter to me, written when he became prime minister. For Southey, knowing his nervous irritability, the limits of his health and strength, and

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* Wordsworth.

the trials he would have to encounter in the House of Commons, foresaw his fate. The Duke of Wellington was spared any lingerings; and Lord Palmerston, at more than eighty years of age, resigned his office straight into the hands of death. With these, physical and political extinction coming together, though there was an immediate shock to the public mind, yet, when this had been surmounted, the man had gone to his rest, and there was nothing left to contemplate but the record of his past career, with the honors and achievements attending it. Lord Melbourne, on the contrary, remained to be half-forgotten as a living man, the bright past obscured to the eyes of others by the half-seen, bedimmed present, and in himself sadly conscious of his stricken state, and, I am afraid, not unvisited by that sense of humiliation in the loss of bodily and mental vigor to which, however unreasonably, men who have possessed both in great force are apt to give way. I heard of him occasionally from Mrs. Norton; and one day when she had been with him she told me that he had repeated, in application to himself, the lines in which Samson Agonistes laments his fallen state:

> "So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
> My hopes all flat, Nature within me seems
> In all her functions weary of herself,
> My race of glory run and race of shame,
> And I shall shortly be with them that rest."

Shortly after this he *was* with them that rest; and then those who admired him, as I did, were permitted to look across the interval which had seemed to divide him from himself, and to see him again in all his original brightness.

I have said that these two—Sir James Stephen and Lord Melbourne—are the only public men whose distinc-

tive features I can at once feel myself permitted, and suppose myself competent, to delineate. I wish that Mr. Gladstone was a third. But, in his early life, I knew him just enough to make me feel it unfitting to write about him with the freedom with which a mere acquaintance could write; and in his after life I have known him too little to have much more to say than what all the world knows well enough without my help. His relation to the times in which he lived and to the people whom he served will be best discerned when the life and the times are past and gone. For myself, if I could care for the people as I ought, I should not find it possible to contemplate their share in the relations between him and them without humiliation on their behalf; and, looking about me in these years in which I am writing, I should feel compelled to ask, Have the English people ever cared whether their minister was of a higher or lower order in his nature and conscience and character and motives, if only he went their way with political tact and with competent skill and ability? To such a question I think the answer would be, that the people are content that in these particulars their minister should represent themselves, or, perhaps, that he should be a man whom they can look down upon in some respects, while they look up to him in others. A great man—a man of a manifold greatness, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and practical—is not what they feel themselves to have occasion for; and, indeed, they are far from extreme to mark what is amiss in a man without principles, provided he do not profess to have what he has not. Hypocrisy would be offensive to them; but, in some respects, a minister who is sure to have no scruples about doing as he is bid will best serve their purposes, whether or not he shall best serve those of their interests which they are unable to appreciate.

I have said that it is not for me to venture upon a portraiture of Mr. Gladstone. But though I may not paint the tree, I may allow myself to pick up a leaf or two that fell as I passed under it.

I imagine it to be difficult for any one who has not filled the position of prime minister and leader of the House of Commons to attain to any conception of the number, weight, and measure of the affairs to which a dutiful man in that position must give an anxious attention. Mrs. Gladstone, some time during her husband's tenure of office as prime minister, spoke to me of the power he possessed of turning from what was arduous and anxious, and becoming at once intently occupied with what was neither; and she regarded this as having something of a saving virtue. But she added that, nevertheless, "it was a frightful life."

I was reminded of this unusual combination of intensity with versatility on one of the few occasions on which I happened to meet with Mr. Gladstone during his tenure of office as first minister. He asked me what I thought of two or three volumes of poetry recently published. I had never heard of them, and the names of the authors were unknown to me. They were presentation copies, sent him by obscure poets, who, if possessed of a grain or two of common-sense, could have had but little expectation that their volumes would be opened by Mr. Gladstone, even if they should pass beyond the sifting hands of his private secretaries. He seemed, however, to be prepared to discuss their merits, had not my entire ignorance stopped the way.

If the life led by a first minister is frightful, which I can well believe it to be in the case of one who is solicitously dutiful, that of a chancellor of the exchequer may not be a very happy one when natural kindness in the

man has to contend with official conscientiousness in the ministry. For it is a life of refusals. And if, moreover, he have gifts and powers which widen indefinitely the area of duty, he may feel himself called upon at times for efforts and activities little short of those which belong to a first minister leading the House of Commons.

In a letter of mine to Mr. Gladstone, written in December, 1864, I adverted to some extraordinary exertions of his in public speaking here and there in the country, and reminded him that Lord Brougham had at one time done the like, and that, in his case, the exertions had been followed by a season of fearful nervous prostration. Lord Brougham, I admitted, seemed to have stopped only to take in fuel, and after a time had gone on again as fast as before; but I regarded Lord Brougham's example as Lord Bacon regarded that of an *old* dram-drinker, said by him to be "the devil's decoy." And I added that, looking to the lives led by cabinet ministers in this country, I thought it desirable that they should be turned out at least every five or six years, for the recovery of their health.

Mr. Gladstone replied (26th December, 1864): "Your conclusion, I am sure, is sound: we ought to be turned out for our good. But in the course of my life I have found it just as difficult to get out of office as to get in, and I have done more doubtful things to get out than to get in. Furthermore, for nine or ten months of the year I am always willing to go, but in the two or three which precede the budget I begin to feel an itch to have the handling of it. Last summer I should have been delighted; now I am indifferent; in February, if I live so long, I shall, I have no doubt, be loath; but in April, quite ready again. Such are my signs of the zodiac."

He was then scarcely past middle age; and if, before old age, and in a less responsible position, his appetite for

office was so uncertain, it may well be believed that, in 1874, when old age had arrived and the functions to be exercised were more arduous than ever, he was more than ready, or would have been so if his personal interests only had been in question, to receive his dismissal at the hands of a people who conceived, unhappily not without reason, that a very different kind of man would represent them more truly.

Chapter XXIII.

WHAT IS LOST IN OLD AGE AND WHAT IS LEFT.—POETIC GIFTS BY INHERITANCE.

Anno Dom. 1872–74. Anno Æt. 72–74.

What time had left to me and what it had taken away, now that my threescore years and ten had run their course, is to be gathered from two or three letters written in 1871.

Aubrey de Vere seemed to me to be in his poetical prime, gaining rather than losing in the lapse of years. But he was some fourteen years my junior. In his sanguine supposition, my powers were to take no more account of years than his own. But I thought otherwise (1st August, 1872): "I am glad you are flowing in poetry again, and I hope you have still your 'two raptures a week.' I have no raptures; but the faculties of conceiving and executing remain to me, such as they are or can be without exaltations. They have been exercised most of this year from time to time, and are still exercised, in correcting my plays and poems for new editions. The present edition of 'Van Artevelde' is nearly at an end. Those of the others a good way off it. . . . I have no doubt that what I do by way of improvement effects its object; but I have more than a doubt about writing in these latter years 'as good poetry as ever I did.' How was it with Enoch?

"'Enoch! the lights are darkened on the hill,
But in the house a thoughtful watch is set;

Warm on the ancient hearth fire glimmers still,
Nor do the travellers their way forget,
Nor is the grasshopper a burden yet.
Though blossoms on the mountain-top the snow,
The maids of music still are lingering near;
Still are the wakeful listeners wise to know,
Still to thy soul the voice of song is dear.'*

"There may be 'glimmerings' and 'lingerings' at threescore and ten, but the incandescence and the close embrace there cannot be."

What advancing years deprived me of, besides "the poetic faculty in some of its ranges," is indicated in a letter to Lady Minto (Bournemouth, 24th June, 1874): "Of late years I have often felt how difficult it is for the old to make the acquaintance of the young. And there is another change which takes place in old age more or less connected with this. I perceive an alteration in the relative values one assigns to this or that attribute. In my youth I cared little about intellect (my own or that of others) in comparison with other things—not better things necessarily, but other. Now, when other things have fallen away and intellect is the main element of companionship left, I learn to prize it."

I hope that, in mentioning these indications of change by old age, I did not intend a complaint. Certainly I had no reason to complain of the want of young companions. If those who had accrued when I was not so very old were now but seldom within reach, yet, when we could meet, they were all to me that they had ever been; and there were those of my own house who were always at hand and never tired of lighting up my dim old age with the radiant reflex of their youth. Of all that went to constitute the charm of young companionship in them, I may hardly

*Ebenezer Elliot.

permit myself to speak; but there is one domestic peculiarity which I feel at liberty to take note of, inasmuch as it bears directly, and with what I should imagine to be a somewhat singular force, upon a subject of much interest to philosophers, both physiological and psychological—the law of nature under which certain faculties and powers are wont to be transmitted by inheritance.

In my family three generations bear witness to the transmission, in one measure or another, of a poetic gift. In my father's generation that gift was much more rare than in those which have followed, and one who possessed it might have been expected to value it as that which is rare is wont to be valued. But he, being a man who undervalued *every* gift that he possessed, who preferred reading to writing, and took more pleasure in what others did than in what he did himself, was seldom led to write verses otherwise than in answer to some call from without, or when some special occasion for it arose. The occasional poem of his which may be most appropriately quoted here is one in the ethical and didactic tone of the eighteenth century, familiar to him in his youth, and still echoing in his ears, when, on my sixteenth birthday (18th October, 1816), he gave me a blank commonplace book with this prefix:

"*Macte novâ virtute, Puer: sic itur ad astra.*

Emerging now from boyhood into youth
Renew to-day the noble quest of truth;
Striving with renovated strength to rise
By truth to virtue, virtue to the skies.
Lo! here the ready tablets! Here indite
All thou canst find to aid the heavenward flight.
Genius and Virtue, as aloft they soar,
Scatter the plumes that them sublimely bore
Till wings of growth celestial from the ken
And reach transport them of mere earthly men.

Oh, catch these boons that they in mercy fling
To glad thine eye and imp thy weaker wing:
They deck their strength with Beauty's varied bloom,
The power of pinion with the pride of plume:
Oh! to behold thee on such wings arise
And bear thy brethren with thee to the skies!"

Next comes my own generation, represented by my two brothers, in their almost boyhood, as well as by myself. I know not the precise dates at which their poems were written. The elder of them died three days after his twentieth birthday. The other was one year and a quarter younger, and the two died within a fortnight of each other. Each of them had been engaged already in designing and executing long and elaborate poems, left unfinished at their death; what was accomplished being, of course, too immature to be worth producing otherwise than in extract and for my present purpose.

Of a poem begun by the elder, twenty-two stanzas—Spenserian—had been written, of which four, at the beginning, will be enough to evince his command of that by no means facile form of versification:

"Pale moonlight is upon time-blasted walls
And crumbling battlements and spreading moss,
And from soft foliage the night-shade falls
Over this silent hall and verdurous fosse:
Thro' the ribbed window and its open cross
The ivy-broken rays are lightly glancing,
Shedding o'er half the scene a yellow gloss,
And all that still solemnity enhancing
O'er which the sunbeam late so merrily was dancing.

"And oh! when we behold how yon gray stream
Towards its eternal bed in darkness steers,
And gaze upon its gleaming waves, that seem
The hoary pilgrims of six thousand years;
When we look up at every rock that rears
Its black peak round us, as the sentinel

That through his sixty ages proudly peers,
Tales of Creation's infancy to tell,
And days when he was young, the guardian of the dell—

"How little look these walls thus worn by time!
How poor their pride, how valueless their fame!
Erewhile the stage of monkish pantomime
And ritual pomp that took Religion's name;
And now . . . an atom in this mighty frame,
A thing that moulders 'mid perennial bloom,
A child of Art that Nature puts to shame;
Sprung from decay, inheriting the tomb,
It borrows Nature's charms and hides in ivied gloom.

"Yet in such cells, within her self-wrought grave,
A chrysalis of stone, did Learning sleep
Thro' the long respite darker ages gave:
When from the East a purple light 'gan peep,
First slowly, from her shell, she learn'd to creep,
Then, with a warmer ray, she quicker speeds,
Till, bounding into air with a light leap,
On glittering wings the airy chase she leads,
And lofty lore displays and spurs to generous deeds."

I have spoken of the unfinished poems, on a large scale, as on the whole immature; but in these stanzas of the elder brother's poem I perceive no marks of immaturity.

The poem projected by the younger was in heroic verse, of which some hundreds of lines had been produced when he died. They are equably and ably written in good verse, but they want the ease and the impulse which are invariably found in the poetry of the elder brother, and I shall prefer to take my extract from an intended drama, in five acts, commencing after the defeat of Robert, Duke of Normandy, by Henry the First of England. The scene is at the court of the Count of Anjou, whither Robert's son flies after the battle, and where he is received by the count and by his guardian, St. Saen. He announces his tidings, and leaves them in a passion of

grief and despair; and then the count endeavors to console St. Saen, who answers thus:

> "That is not, Anjou, oh! that is not all.
> No, that is nothing; well I know the prince;
> Not long will reason there to grief resign.
> Nor hard of heart nor weak of soul is he;
> Good, exquisitely sorrow's sting to feel;
> Great, nobly, proudly, to despise her chain.
> It is not he for whom my soul is sick.
> But Henry on the neck of Normandy
> Hath set a tyrant's foot, and on the wind
> Are all her laws and all her liberties,
> And all the energies of all her people;
> Their national pride, their vigor and their virtue,
> Their ancient rights and all their happiness.
> It is a woe for which the brave may weep,
> And down the warrior's hard and grisly cheek
> This day the streaming grief profuse shall fall
> And mix with women's tears.
> Weep on! ye men of Normandy, weep on!
> If any scoff, say that your country's dead;
> Say that your countrymen are [ ]* slaves;
> Say that St. Saen is weeping."

Of the gifts he exercised at eighteen years of age it would be mere guesswork to say what proportions they might have reached had they not been arrested in their development; but that the gifts were in him I have no doubt.

The two brothers were devoted to each other; one of their poems, a satire of five hundred and seventy lines, was a joint production, and the portion of it quoted at p. 29, vol. i., shows that, among their other attributes, wit was not wanting; but that not being to my present purpose, I must leave the second generation and proceed to the third.

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* A word has been obliterated in the MS. without being replaced.

The eldest born of my children is no longer with us. While he was with us, it was not known to me that he wrote verses. Those that I find in a notebook are, with two exceptions, rough copies, not very legibly written, and much corrected. Two had been written out in fair copies. The first is this:

"His life was as a woven rope;
A single strand may lightly part;
Love's simple thread is all her hope,
And breaking, breaks her heart."

It has no date. The second is dated "1867," when he was twenty-two years of age:

"Her eyes, more delicately bright
Than harebell trembling in the dew,
Too prodigal of their delight,
Were cast on old and new.

"Lips where the sweet life rippling played
Softly, as o'er a summer sea,
Were lavish of the gifts they made
To all the world and me.

"None was too paltry, none too mean,
To share the triumph of her grace:
Nothing was common or unclean
That courted her embrace.

"But Love was jealous, and forbore
To touch that general largesse;
And lovers still came more and more,
But Love came less and less."

I had selected from the poems of each of the four children remaining to me examples not less pertinent, but I am not allowed to produce them.

Chapter XXIV.

THREE WINTERS IN LONDON.—LORD ROMILLY.—"THE CLUB."

Anno Dom. 1872-75. Anno Æt. 72–75.

I find myself coming to an end. Of the three years which followed the close of my official life, we passed several months in London; in 1872 and 1873 six months, from October to April; in 1874 three months, from October to January. Life in London was new to our children, and seemed almost new to ourselves, having now lived elsewhere for nearly thirty years. It was only under pressure that we resumed it; but it was necessary that my son Harry should pass some months there to be crammed for an examination; and as he was only eighteen years of age, we thought it incumbent upon us to give him an arm-chair by a domestic fireside to go to sleep in when the labors of the day were over.

How we liked the life is told in a letter to Lord Blachford (23d November, 1872): "We each and all of us find London a very pleasant Pandemonium. We have been giving little dinners once a week, or, rather, twice a fortnight, and thinking ourselves and our dinners very agreeable; and complimenting Nature that made us, and the cook that made the dinners."

At one of these dinners we were enabled to give Lady Minto certain opportunities, which, it will be seen, she highly valued. She was at Brighton, but thinking of coming up to town, when I wrote to her (6th Jan., 1874):

"Perhaps you will be in town on the 17th, and, if so,

will you dine with us on that day (quarter to eight)? I think you said you would like to meet the Dean of St. Paul's, and I think you will like him when you do meet him. He is rather a recent friend of mine, but also rather a fast friend; and there will be also a man whom I have admired and wished to cultivate for the last two or three years — Sir James Hannen, Judge of the Matrimonial Causes Court. Besides these there will be quite a new acquaintance, but one whom I have found full of literature and poetry — Lord Aberdare. Whom else I forget at this moment; but I think it promises to be a pleasant dinner; and if you were to be one, the promise would be brightened and confirmed. . . ."

The answer contains some little ambiguities: "Thank you for fixing my wavering fancies. I hardly knew what to do till I got your note just now. It makes me quite sure that I can't do better than avail myself of its pleasant invitation. I shall like of all things to meet your *fast* friends. Cigarettes between courses? One knows the kind of thing. I am especially gratified by your friendly forethought in making me acquainted with Sir James Hannen. In this strange world one should prepare one's self for all sorts of accidents and emergencies, and it is well to have a friend everywhere."

The dinner took place, and was, I dare say, agreeable enough, though the cigarettes between courses may have been wanting.

London had become since I had had my abode in it not so much a city as an agglomeration of cities; and a certain peculiar relation of time and space which had always belonged to it was more marked than ever. Half an hour seemed to count for two hours elsewhere, and two miles of distance between friends to count for ten. So the life in London had its disappointments when, from time to

time, Belgravia sighed after the far-distant Tyburnia; but it had its sufficient compensations, and I wrote of it accordingly to Lady Lytton (16th February, 1874): "If this life were to last more than six months, or be repeated year after year, no doubt I should get tired of it; but for the present I not only like it for the girls, but I can find interest and amusement in it for myself. Men with whom I was in relations of, not exactly friendship, but friendly intimacy, forty and even fifty years ago, I meet again; and, strange as it may seem, I meet some of them with pleasure; those that is, who, like Charles Villiers, are merely their very selves grown old. Others, who are but 'remnants of themselves,' like Charles Austin, give me a sort of shock at first sight; but still it is interesting to me, in a way, to look at them 'revisiting the glimpses of the moon,' and recognize the man in the ghost. And in the case of friends of mine, who, though not young, are of a later generation than myself, it is a pleasure to see them growing into friends of my girls, and likely to be friends of theirs when the life interest in my friendship falls in. And if the friendship passes on, in some instances, to their children, so much the better. So on the whole I am willing to account this winter, as well as last, well spent in London; and when Easter comes we go to Bournemouth, and the pine-woods and the sea-shore will give us rest."

In the first weeks of this year, 1874, there was a rekindling of a kindly affection which had almost sunk out of sight in the lapse of some forty years of separation. When writing of my associates in the years of my youth, from twenty-four to twenty-seven, I said that John Romilly was sensitive and reserved, and, judging by his countenance, of a very gentle and affectionate nature. And when I said no more than that, the evidence of his countenance was all that was needed. But how ardently and tena-

ciously affectionate was his nature I had yet to learn when in 1874, becoming again intimate with him, I became intimately conversant with the relations between him and the daughter who was living with him.

I wrote to him, on taking up my abode in London, to say that I should like to see his face again, and I was surprised at the tone of his reply. I then learned that, in that great chasm of separation, his friendly feeling had not been lost past recovery. On the contrary, it seemed to reawaken with a warmth I had not till now known to have belonged to it; and possibly it was the more rich and far-reaching in recollections inasmuch as there was no intermediate intercourse to meddle with them, and he was carried back to his youth at one bound. It was so, I think, with me; but, when we met, my pleasure in the meeting was overcome by the shock which his appearance gave me; for he was evidently much broken in health, looking "not like the ruins of his youth, but like those ruins ruined." He became continually weaker and worse as the year passed on which was to be his last, and his physician thought it wonderful that his intellect was unimpaired, and that he could still employ himself in his vocation, delivering judgments with the laboriousness which had characterized his whole career; for he is said to have delivered more than any master of the rolls known to the history of that court. His memory certainly was unimpaired; in one of my last visits I asked him whether he remembered a breakfast of Benthamites I had given some forty or fifty years before at which I had brought them acquainted with Wordsworth, and what Charles Austin had said when Wordsworth left the room; and he answered at once, "Yes I do. He said, 'That is a MAN.'"

He died on the 23d December, 1874, and on the 31st I wrote to Lady Minto: "My chief interest in London this

winter has been a mournful one, in Lord Romilly and in his daughter, the one who lived with him. She is very interesting to me, I hardly know why. I have seen her as often as I could, but that was not very often, and, of course, I cannot know much about her; but she gave me the impression of a deeper nature than belongs to most girls; perhaps deepened by the sadness of the circumstances; and I hope to make a friend of her so far as a man of seventy-four can expect to make a friend of a girl."

In January, 1875, the question arose whether we should remain in London, as in the two previous years, till Easter, or leave it at the end of the month; and the answer I gave was, that if Lord Romilly had been living I should have wished for the longer term, but that now I did not care; and at the end of January we went to Bournemouth, where we have since remained.

Lord Romilly had been desirous to signalize the revival of our friendship by having me elected to "The Club." It was long since I had read my "Boswell's Johnson," and not knowing what "*The* Club" was, I explained that I had withdrawn some fifteen years before from the only club to which I had ever belonged, and that, being so little in the way of using a club, it would be unreasonable of me to propose to be a member of one. He still insisted, and, seeing that he was much bent upon it, I acquiesced; and then I found that the club in question was the club of historical celebrity founded by Johnson, Reynolds, Gibbon, Burke, Langton, Beauclerk, and Goldsmith in 1764, and consisting of thirty-five members who meet to dine (as many of them as are so disposed) once in every fortnight during the session of Parliament. My election was announced to me in terms which were originally dictated by Gibbon and had been used ever since:

"Sir, I have the pleasure to inform you that you had last night the honor to be elected a member of 'THE CLUB.'" I was very sensible of "the honor," and thought that Gibbon had done quite right to speak out. And the only dinner of the club at which I have been able to attend (for I left London two days after it, and except in passing through I have not been there since) seemed to me as distinguished by its representative character as the club itself is in its origin. "There were ten besides myself," I said to Lady Minto; "Learning and literature were represented by the editors of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews* and by Lecky and Lord Acton; the Church by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Dean of Westminster; the law by Lord Romilly; statecraft by Lord Derby and Spencer Walpole; and our dukes by the Duke of Cleveland. It was a curious social combination, and I thought it as agreeable as a dinner could be from which youth and women were absent. Lord Bacon says that at the council table care should be taken that there should be a due proportion of old and young; and I should say the same of a dinner-table; and Miss Cobb would say that women and men ought to take sweet counsel together, whether dining or deliberating. However, I was *reminded* of some of that beloved sex; for 'The Life of Gilbert'* and 'The Life of Hugh' were both discussed. Lord Derby (such an enthusiast!) said the former was 'charmingly done,' and no less than three quotations were delivered by three different diners from 'The Life of Hugh.' Certainly Hugh's repartees live in his life. Within two or three weeks before I had heard one of them quoted at our house by George Venables and another at a dinner at Lady Rich's by Sir James Colvile."

* The works alluded to are "The Life of Hugh Elliot" and "The Life of Gilbert Elliot, First Earl of Minto," both by Lady Minto.

So there was an end of London. And the same letter proceeds: "Well, leaving London behind, and all its dinners, I throw myself now upon the two or three dear old maids who are my resources here. One cultivates her garden, another her mind; and one charm they have in common, which stands out when a man gets to his seventy-fourth year—that when I go to them I know they will be glad to see me."

In the last page of my essay on "The Life Poetic" are these words:

"When a poet's own works are as he would wish to leave them, nothing of that which is peculiar to him as a poet, and not common to him as a man, will so well become his latter days as to look beyond himself, and have regard to the future fortunes of his art involved in the rising generation of poets. It should be his desire and his joy to cherish the lights by which his own shall be succeeded and perhaps outshone. The personal influence of an old poet upon a young one—youth and age being harmonized by the sympathies of the art—may do what no writings can to mould those spirits by which, hereafter, many are to be moulded; and as the reflex of a glorious sunset will sometimes tinge the eastern sky, the declining poet may communicate to those who are to come after him, not guidance only, but the very colors of his genius, the temper of his moral mind, and the inspiration of his hopes and promises. This done, or ceasing to be practicable through efflux of light, it will only remain for the poet to wait in patience and peace,

'While night
Invests the sea, and wishèd morn delays.'" *

What have I done in my latter days, or what token is

* "Paradise Lost."

there in this record of them, that can be said to be in harmony with this view of what should have been? Alas! not an act or a word. It is true that no reflex was to be expected, inasmuch as the sunset is not glorious. But where is the cherishing? I can only plead that my life has not been the "Life Poetic" of which I was writing in my essay, but a much-varied and often much-busied life, in which the poetic was but one element; and when, after its threescore years and ten were past, it came to be a life of leisure and retirement, it found itself personally apart from those of the next generation who were on the road to occupy high positions, or had achieved them. One portion, however, I can claim to have in the two generations of poets who have succeeded mine—that which comes of a large and high appreciation—for I do not believe that in any country or any time there have been so many with a genuine gift of inborn poetic genius.

Chapter XXV.

RESUMPTION OF MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY.—A PREFATORY POST-SCRIPT.

Anno Dom. 1872–75. Anno Æt. 72–75.

Some early chapters of my autobiography had been written in 1865, when the insurrection of the negroes in Jamaica brought upon me such a pressure of official occupation as put a stop to every other. I resumed the task at the close of my official life, in 1872.

I mentioned the resumption to Lord Blachford (22d September, 1872): "My pouches are dropping off as if in anticipation of the last drop, which will be this day week. And, in like anticipation, I have taken up my autobiography in the endeavor and the hope to supply their place. It is seven years since I wrote what is written of it, and I think I feel the difficulties of the task the more for the seven years more of age. I say to myself, 'I never liked the public, and how is it that I come to be so confidential?' I suppose the answer is, that within the great gross public there is a little delicate public whom I should like to make friends with posthumously, so far as the dead can make friends with the living. Or, perhaps, on the supposition that my works are to live, I go on to suppose that my life will be written by somebody; in which case it would be better that it should be written by such a kind and considerate hand as my own than by that of some other candid biographer. The worst of it is that one cannot whisper one's biography in the ear of

the little delicate public without being overheard by the monster; and also, that whatever gentle and tender consideration one may experience at one's own hands, that will not necessarily effect a rescue from the hands of others. Still, this task seems more likely to interest and occupy me than any other, and the difficulties will probably become less as I get more used to dealing with them. My resumption began with a revision, and I have adopted all your suggestions. As I proceed, by far the largest portion of what I have to tell is what is brought back to my memory by the letters relating to it. The letters tell me the story which I am to tell; and the question is, when to tell it myself and when to let them tell it by extracts—whether to have more of fluent narrative or more of actual record. My love of exactness favors the letters, especially when the 'ipsissima verba' are lively or characteristic; but —— fears that the narrative will be too much broken and interrupted. It is a question of proportion and for the exercise of judgment in detail, and I am afraid I should seek in vain for a rule."

Some other difficulties, and especially the difficulties in judging of the measure of self-exhibition or self-exposure to be resolved upon, are dealt with in another letter (26th November, 1872): "You write as if you thought I was going to publish my autobiography in my lifetime, which I have never dreamed of doing. Of course there is such a thing as posthumous egoism, and a corpse stands in need of a shroud. But egoism is of the essence of autobiography, and I had made up my mind to so much of it as naturally belongs to me. Every one takes an interest in himself and in what is thought of him—some more, some less—and more and less not only substantively, but in the proportion which it bears to his other interests. I should think I have a fair average share of it; and my desire in

my autobiography should be not to pretend to have less. I sometimes shrink a little, and have to remind myself that I am dead and buried; and the feeling tends to increase as I pass away from my youth, in which I find less of myself, and on towards the identical Henry Taylor that I am now. But I mean to make a good fight against it. If an autobiography is to be personally interesting, it is in some measure through the reader sharing the interest which the writer takes in himself. Whatever the subject of a book may be, if the writer seems to take no interest in it the reader will be apt to take none. And then, as to the letters, I should be disposed to say that the exhibition of one's clever self in one's letters would be not more egoistical than the exhibition of one's immensely interesting self in one's life. Indeed, in the case of some sorts of letters, I should say that the egoism is less, and rather resembles that which is displayed in the publication of poems or essays. Many of my letters, though essentially personal, and written for the sake of the interest or amusement my correspondent would find in them, have been written with almost as much care as some people would bestow on the writing of a sonnet or an ode. They were an act of meditation or an exercise in diction, in which I took the more pleasure because I thought that my correspondent would take a pleasure in it. This is not the approved notion of what makes agreeable letter-writing: and I do not doubt that most of the letters which are agreeable to the person to whom they are addressed, and at the moment when they are received, are written with an easy fluency, and with no more thought than comes unsummoned as well as uncompelled; but I do doubt whether letters so written are the letters which are found agreeable when read in a book. I suspect that the published letters which are praised for ease and fluency are

those to which the effect of ease and fluency has been contributed by art. At all events, my mind is one in which ease and fluency have no part or lot; it is essentially a brooding, a concocting, and a shaping mind; and it must work according to its law. Any letter of mine which has been, in Chinese phrase, 'a necessary communication,' may have been written with ease; but any which are worth reading have been otherwise written."

He rejoined, 2d December, 1872: "I think I almost entirely agree with you about letter-writing. . . . I quite agree in that letters may most profitably be works of art; but then I think that one great charm of letters—the distinctive, though not the principal charm—is the unconscious exhibition of pure self, which, if conscious, would be 'posing.'. . . I certainly would not have your letters different on any account. I see you in every line of them. I do not see anything of what *I* call self-exhibition, but only the resolution to do justice to your conceptions, whether conceptions of substance or conceptions of manner or aspect."

Of my progress in the work I had something to say to Lord Blachford in refusing an invitation to pay him a visit, 12th May, 1874: "I am beginning now to excuse all my faults of omission on the ground of extreme old age; and under the iron rule to which I am subject I rather think that, angel as I am, my visits will come to be as few and far between as my letters. And, indeed, I have some motive of my own for staying at home; for, though I have no troubles about horses and farmhouses and churches and schools and woods, I have that slow and halting old autobiography to get on with; and as I believe that much will depend upon the manner in which it is *written*, I want to get on with it while I retain whatever gifts of writing, be they more or less, I may now have at my command. And

in this business it is not the week or the fortnight spent in a visit which represents the time lost by it; for after every suspension or break I find the resumption of the task encumbered with divers difficulties. I have to find out where I was in it, and what I was about, and what I was intending, and where this lot of papers is and where that; and I have to conjure up again the audacity required for such a task; and I have to conjure down the sort of sadness that comes upon one again and again after every interval when one goes in among the departed spirits the back way."

When the first volume was printed privately I sent Lord Blachford a copy; and in a letter, most interesting to me, which he wrote about it, he expressed his astonishment as well as amusement at some parts of it; and I replied: "I believe there is no sort of book one can write of which it is so difficult for one to guess what will be the effect upon others. As to your astonishment, I suppose it is at my want of reserve. . . . If there is an objection to unreserve it should lie, perhaps, against writing one's own life at all, rather than against disclosing what was most material in it. Nevertheless, there is a measure and a limit, of course, in laying things open; and as the barber said to the chimney-sweep when he came to be shaved, 'one *must* draw the line somewhere.' I suppose you think I have forgotten myself so far as to shave the chimney-sweep."

In the case of some works I have thought that what had been written as a preface would be better read as a postscript. And, looking upon this chapter in that light, it behooves me to add a few words in a more serious spirit.

With whatever measure of unreserve I may seem to have written about myself, it has been no part of my design to speak the whole truth. A man may tell the truth of himself somewhat largely without disclosing either the inward

offences or the weaknesses and littlenesses of his life and nature. The latter—the little, shabby, shameful things of no consequence, done or said—will to some men be more disagreeable in the recollection than their graver delinquencies. I do not affect, for I cannot afford, to render an account of either. But when the truth and nothing but the truth is told, and when what is told is not a little, probably as much of the whole truth may be inferred or divined (by those who think it worth their while) as is often to be made out about anything. If, indeed, the truth about anything were understood to be the whole truth, the question "What *is* truth?" might have proceeded from quite another mouth than that of Pilate.

THE END.